

By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

LIZA OF LAMBETH
MRS. CRADDOCK
THE MERRY-GO-ROUND
THE EXPLORER
THE MAGICIAN
THE MOON AND SIXPENCE
OF HUMAN BONDAGE
THE TREMBLING OF A LEAF
ON A CHINESE SCREEN
THE PAINTED VEIL
THE CASUARINA TREE
ASHENDEN
THE GENTLEMAN IN THE PARLOUR
CAKES AND ALB
THE FIRST PERSON SINGULAR
THE NARROW CORNER
AH KING
ALTOGETHER (Collected Short Stories)
DON FERNANDO
COSMOPOLITANS
THEATRE
THE SUMMING UP
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY
THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE
BOOKS AND YOU
UP AT THE VILLA
STRICTLY PERSONAL
THE RAZOR'S EDGE
THEN AND NOW
HERE AND THERE (Collection of Short Stories)
CREATURES OF CIRCUMSTANCE
CATALINA
QUARTET (Four Short Stories with Film Scripts)
TRIO (Three Short Stories with Film Scripts)
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	THE UNATTAINABLE		FOR SERVICES RENDERED
	HOME AND BEAUTY		SHEPPY

TRIO



Stories by W. Somerset Maugham

Screen adaptation by

W. Somerset Maugham, R. C. Sherriff
and Noel Langley



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The film "Trio" is a Gainsborough Picture presented by The J. Arthur Rank Organisation. Producer, Antony Darnborough. Director, Ken Annakin and Harold French.

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TRIO

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THE
VERGER



THERE had been a christening that afternoon at St. Peter's, Neville Square, and Albert Edward Foreman still wore his vergers' gown. He kept his new one, its folds as full and stiff as though it were made not of alpaca but of perennial bronze, for funerals and weddings (St. Peter's, Neville Square, was a church much favoured by the fashionable for these ceremonies) and now he wore only his second-best. He wore it with complacency, for it was the dignified symbol of his office, and without it (when he took it off to go home) he had the disconcerting sensation of being somewhat insufficiently clad. He took pains with it; he pressed it and ironed it himself. During the sixteen years he had been vergers of this church he had had a succession of such gowns, but he had never been able to throw them away when they were worn out and the complete series, neatly wrapped up in brown paper, lay in the bottom drawer of the wardrobe in his bedroom.

The vergers busied himself quietly, replacing the painted wooden cover on the marble font, taking away a chair that had been brought for an infirm old lady, and waited for the vicar to have finished in the vestry so that he could tidy up in there and go home. Presently he saw him walk across the chancel, genuflect in front of the high altar and come down the aisle; but he still wore his cassock.

"What's he 'anging about for?" the vergers said to himself. "Don't 'e know I want my tea?"

The vicar had been but recently appointed, a red-faced energetic man in the early forties, and Albert Edward still

regretted his predecessor, a clergyman of the old school who preached leisurcly sermons in a silvery voice and dined out a great deal with his more aristocratic parishioners. He liked things in church to be just so, but he never fussed; he was not like this new man who wanted to have his finger in every pie. But Albert Edward was tolerant. St. Peter's was in a very good neighbourhood and the parishioners were a very nice class of people. The new vicar had come from the East End and he couldn't be expected to fall in all at once with the discreet ways of his fashionable congregation.

"All this 'ustle," said Albert Edward. "But give 'im time, he'll learn."

When the vicar had walked down the aisle so far that he could address the vergcr without raising his voice more than was becoming in a place of worship he stopped.

"Foreman, will you come into the vestry for a minute. I have something to say to you."

"Very good, sir."

The vicar waited for him to come up and they walked up the church together.

"A very nice christening, I thought, sir. Funny 'ow the baby stopped cryin' the moment you took him."

"I've noticed they very often do," said the vicar, with a little smile. "After all I've had a good deal of practice with them."

It was a source of subdued pride to him that he could nearly always quiet a whimpering infant by the manner in which he held it and he was not unconscious of the amused admiration with which mothers and nurses watched him settle the baby in the crook of his surpliced arm. The vergcr knew that it pleased him to be complimented on his talent.

The vicar preceded Albert Edward into the vestry. Albert Edward was a trifle surprised to find the two churchwardens there. He had not seen them come in. They gave him pleasant nods.

"Good afternoon, my lord. Good afternoon, sir," he said to one after the other.

They were elderly men, both of them, and they had been churchwardens almost as long as Albert Edward had been vergers. They were sitting now at a handsome refectory table that the old vicar had brought many years before from Italy and the vicar sat down in the vacant chair between them. Albert Edward faced them, the table between him and them, and wondered with slight uneasiness what was the matter. He remembered still the occasion on which the organist had got into trouble and the bother they had all had to hush things up. In a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, they couldn't afford a scandal. On the vicar's red face was a look of resolute benignity, but the others bore an expression that was slightly troubled.

"He's been naggin' them, he 'as," said the vergers to himself. "He's jockeyed them into doin' something, but they don't 'alf like it. That's what it is, you mark my words."

But his thoughts did not appear on Albert Edward's clean-cut and distinguished features. He stood in a respectful but not obsequious attitude. He had been in service before he was appointed to his ecclesiastical office, but only in very good houses, and his deportment was irreproachable. Starting as a page-boy in the household of a merchant-prince, he had risen by due degrees from the position of fourth to first footman, for a year he had been single-handed butler to a widowed peeress and till the vacancy occurred at St. Peter's, butler with two men under him in the house of a retired ambassador. He was tall, spare, grave and dignified. He looked, if not like a duke, at least like an actor of the old school who specialised in dukes' parts. He had tact, firmness and self-assurance. His character was unimpeachable.

The vicar began briskly.

"Foreman, we've got something rather unpleasant to say to you. You've been here a great many years and I think his

lordship and the general agree with me that you've fulfilled the duties of your office to the satisfaction of everybody concerned."

The two churchwardens nodded.

"But a most extraordinary circumstance came to my knowledge the other day and I felt it my duty to impart it to the churchwardens. I discovered to my astonishment that you could neither read nor write."

The vergers' face betrayed no sign of embarrassment.

"The last vicar knew that, sir," he replied. "He said it didn't make no difference. He always said there was a great deal too much education in the world for 'is taste."

"It's the most amazing thing I ever heard," cried the general. "Do you mean to say that you've been vergers of this church for sixteen years and never learned to read or write?"

"I went into service when I was twelve, sir. The cook in the first place tried to teach me once, but I didn't seem to 'ave the knack for it, and then what with one thing and another I never seemed to 'ave the time. I've never really found the want of it. I think a lot of these young fellows waste a rare lot of time readin' when they might be doin' something useful."

"But don't you want to know the news?" said the other churchwarden. "Don't you ever want to write a letter?"

"No, me lord, I seem to manage very well without. And of late years now they've all these pictures in the papers I get to know what's goin' on pretty well. Me wife's quite a scholar and if I want to write a letter she writes it for me. It's not as if I was a bettin' man."

The two churchwardens gave the vicar a troubled glance and then looked down at the table.

"Well, Foreman, I've talked the matter over with these gentlemen and they quite agree with me that the situation is impossible. At a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, we cannot have a vergers who can neither read nor write."

Albert Edward's thin, sallow face reddened and he

moved uneasily on his feet, but he made no reply.

"Understand me, Foreman, I have no complaint to make against you. You do your work quite satisfactorily; I have the highest opinion both of your character and of your capacity; but we haven't the right to take the risk of some accident that might happen owing to your lamentable ignorance. It's a matter of prudence as well as of principle."

"But couldn't you learn, Foreman?" asked the general.

"No, sir, I'm afraid I couldn't, not now. You see I'm not as young as I was and if I couldn't seem able to get the letters in me 'ead when I was a nipper I don't think there's much chance of it now."

"We don't want to be harsh with you, Foreman," said the vicar. "But the churchwardens and I have quite made up our minds. We'll give you three months and if at the end of that time you cannot read and write I'm afraid you'll have to go."

Albert Edward had never liked the new vicar. He'd said from the beginning that they'd made a mistake when they gave him St. Peter's. He wasn't the type of man they wanted with a classy congregation like that. And now he straightened himself a little. He knew his value and he wasn't going to allow himself to be put upon.

"I'm very sorry, sir, I'm afraid it's no good. I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks. I've lived a good many years without knowin' 'ow to read and write and without wishin' to praise myself, self-praise is no recommendation, I don't mind sayin' I've done my duty in that state of life in which it's pleased a merciful providence to place me, and if I *could* learn now I don't know as I'd want to."

"In that case, Foreman, I'm afraid you must go."

"Yes, sir, I quite understand. I shall be 'appy to 'and in my resignation as soon as you've found somebody to take my place."

But when Albert Edward with his usual politeness had closed the church door behind the vicar and the two church-

wardens he could not sustain the air of unruffled dignity with which he had borne the blow inflicted upon him and his lips quivered. He walked slowly back to the vestry and hung up on its proper peg his verger's gown. He sighed as he thought of all the grand funerals and smart weddings it had seen. He tidied everything up, put on his coat, and hat in hand walked down the aisle. He locked the church door behind him. He strolled across the square, but deep in his sad thoughts he did not take the street that led him home, where a nice strong cup of tea awaited him; he took the wrong turning. He walked slowly along. His heart was heavy. He did not know what he should do with himself. He did not fancy the notion of going back to domestic service; after being his own master for so many years, for the vicar and churchwardens could say what they liked, it was he that had run St. Peter's, Neville Square, he could scarcely demean himself by accepting a situation. He had saved a tidy sum, but not enough to live on without doing something, and life seemed to cost more every year. He had never thought to be troubled with such questions. The vergers of St. Peter's, like the popes of Rome, were there for life. He had often thought of the pleasant reference the vicar would make in his sermon at evensong the first Sunday after his death to the long and faithful service, and the exemplary character of their late verger, Albert Edward Foreman. He sighed deeply. Albert Edward was a non-smoker and a total abstainer, but with a certain latitude; that is to say he liked a glass of beer with his dinner and when he was tired he enjoyed a cigarette. It occurred to him now that one would comfort him and since he did not carry them he looked about him for a shop where he could buy a packet of Gold Flake. He did not at once see one and walked on a little. It was a long street, with all sorts of shops in it, but there was not a single one where you could buy cigarettes.

"That's strange," said Albert Edward.

To make sure he walked right up the street again. No,

there was no doubt about it. He stopped and looked reflectively up and down.

"I can't be the only man as walks along this street and wants a fag," he said. "I shouldn't wonder but what a fellow might do very well with a little shop here. Tobacco and sweets, you know."

He gave a sudden start.

"That's an idea," he said. "Strange 'ow things come to you when you least expect it."

He turned, walked home, and had his tea.

"You're very silent this afternoon, Albert," his wife remarked.

"I'm thinkin'," he said.

He considered the matter from every point of view and next day he went along the street and by good luck found a little shop to let that looked as though it would exactly suit him. Twenty-four hours later he had taken it and when a month after that he left St. Peter's, Neville Square, for ever, Albert Edward Foreman set up in business as a tobacconist and newsagent. His wife said it was a dreadful come-down after being verger of St. Peter's, but he answered that you had to move with the times, the church wasn't what it was, and 'enccforward he was going to render unto Cæsar what was Cæsar's. Albert Edward did very well. He did so well that in a year or so it struck him that he might take a second shop and put a manager in. He looked for another long street that hadn't got a tobacconist in it and when he found it, and a shop to let, took it and stocked it. This was a success too. Then it occurred to him that if he could run two he could run half a dozen, so he began walking about London, and whenever he found a long street that had no tobacconist and a shop to let he took it. In the course of ten years he had acquired no less than ten shops and he was making money hand over fist. He went round to all of them himself every Monday, collected the week's takings and took them to the bank

One morning when he was there paying in a bundle of notes and a heavy bag of silver the cashier told him that the manager would like to see him. He was shown into an office and the manager shook hands with him.

"Mr. Foreman, I wanted to have a talk to you about the money you've got on deposit with us. D'you know exactly how much it is?"

"Not within a pound or two, sir; but I've got a pretty rough idea."

"Apart from what you paid in this morning it's a little over thirty thousand pounds. That's a very large sum to have on deposit and I should have thought you'd do better to invest it."

"I wouldn't want to take no risk, sir. I know it's safe in the bank."

"You needn't have the least anxiety. We'll make you out a list of absolutely gilt-edged securities. They'll bring you in a better rate of interest than we can possibly afford to give you."

A troubled look settled on Mr. Foreman's distinguished face. "I've never 'ad anything to do with stocks and shares and I'd 'ave to leave it all in your 'ands," he said.

The manager smiled. "We'll do everything. All you'll have to do next time you come in is just to sign the transfers."

"I could do that all right," said Albert uncertainly. "But 'ow should I know what I was signin'?"

"I suppose you can read," said the manager a trifle sharply.

Mr. Foreman gave him a disarming smile.

"Well, sir, that's just it. I can't. I know it sounds funny like, but there it is, I can't read or write, only me name, an' I only learnt to do that when I went into business."

The manager was so surprised that he jumped up from his chair.

"That's the most extraordinary thing I ever heard."

"You see, it's like this, sir, I never 'ad the opportunity

until it was too late and then some'ow I wouldn't. I got obstinate like."

The manager stared at him as though he were a prehistoric monster.

"And do you mean to say that you've built up this important business and amassed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being able to read or write? Good God, man, what would you be now if you had been able to?"

"I can tell you that, sir," said Mr. Foreman, a little smile on his still aristocratic features. "I'd be verger of St. Peter's, Neville Square."



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TRIO

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THE VERGER



Adapted for the Screen from the Story by
W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

2. *Interior Bedroom. Day.*

The bottom drawer of the wardrobe, showing at least a dozen brown paper parcels, neatly tied with string, lying on top of each other.

NARRATOR: On an afternoon in May 1924 there was to be a christening at St. Peter's, Neville Square, a church much favoured by the fashionable for these ceremonies. The verger, Albert Foreman, was ironing his second-best gown for the occasion. During his seventeen years of service he had had a succession of these gowns, but he had never been able to throw them away, and so they lay wrapped in brown paper in a bottom drawer in his bedroom.

Emma, his landlady, pulls the drawer open wider. She is trying to find room for a larger bundle of underwear held in her arms, but gives it up as a bad job.

She pushes the drawer to again, gets up and hurries out of the room.

3. *Interior Kitchen. Day.*

Emma comes in and dumps down her bundle of clothes.

EMMA: I thought you was going to clear out that drawer this morning, Mr. Foreman.

ALBERT: So I was.

EMMA: Well, how much longer are you going to keep putting it off?

ALBERT: I don't know. I just haven't the heart to get rid of them, somehow.

EMMA: What you can possibly want with a lot of old gowns cluttering up the place for beats me.

ALBERT: All right. I'll do it to-morrow.

He folds his gown carefully and puts it away in a small attaché case.

EMMA: You better had if you don't want to see them turned into dusters. You'll be back by six, won't you?

THE VERGER

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ALBERT: Can't say. With old Ferguson you always knew where you were—thirty-five minutes to the dot, but with this new chap anything might happen.

EMMA: I'll have your tea ready by six, anyway.

ALBERT: Right you are.

He takes his hat and case and goes out of the room.

DISSOLVE

4. *The christening has just taken place, and the parents, etc., are leaving. They are all very smartly dressed. Top hats, tail-coats. The father lingers long enough to slip a tip into Foreman's hand.*

GUEST: Thank you verger. A very nice service.

ALBERT: Thank you very much, sir.

The sexton comes along.

ALBERT: Five bob. And I'm the tenth inheritor of a foolish fack. I don't know what the aristocracy is coming to.

SEXTON: Took his time, didn't he?

Foreman pulls out his watch and looks at it.

ALBERT: Believes in doing it proper while he's about it. What are you waiting for?

SEXTON: His ribs wants to see me about them bells.

ALBERT: Oh!

SEXTON: Ferguson always left them to me. What's he want to bother himself with them for?

The vicar walks down the aisle sufficiently far to address the verger without raising his voice more than is becoming in a place of worship.

VICAR: Foreman, will you come into the vestry for a minute—I've something to say to you.

FOREMAN: Very good, sir.

He walks up to the vicar and together they turn towards the vestry.

FOREMAN: A very nice christening, I thought, sir.

Funny how the baby stopped crying the moment you took him.

VICAR (*with a satisfied smile*): I've noticed they very often do. After all, I've had a good deal of practice with them.

He goes into the vestry followed by Albert.

5. *Interior Vestry. Day.*

Two elderly churchwardens are sitting at the handsome refectory table that the old vicar had bought many years before from Italy, as Albert and the Vicar enter. The vicar sits down in a vacant chair between them. Albert is a trifle surprised to find the churchwardens there. They give him pleasant nods.

ALBERT: Good afternoon, m'lords.

1ST CHURCHWARDEN: 'Afternoon, Foreman.

ALBERT (*to the General*): Good afternoon, sir. Didn't expect to find you here to-day.

GENERAL: Didn't myself, as a matter of fact. But the vicar wanted to have a little talk—so here we are!

The churchwardens look at the respectful figure of Albert and then at each other a little uncomfortably. They turn to the vicar, who begins briskly:

VICAR: We've got something rather unpleasant to say to you, Foreman. You've been here a great many years and I think his lordship and the general agree with me that you've fulfilled the duties of your office to the satisfaction of everybody concerned.

GENERAL: Admirably—admirably.

ALBERT: Thank you, sir.

VICAR (*continuing*): But a most extraordinary circumstance came to my knowledge the other day and I felt it my duty to impart it to the churchwardens. I

discovered to my astonishment that you could neither read nor write.

ALBERT (*without embarrassment*): The last vicar knew that, sir. Said it didn't make no difference. He always said there was a great deal too much education in the world, for his taste.

GENERAL: It's the most amazing thing I ever heard. Do you mean to say that you've been verger of this church for seventeen years and never learned to read or write?

ALBERT: I went into service when I was twelve, sir. The cook in me first place tried to teach me once, but I didn't seem to have the knack for it, and then what with one thing and another I never seemed to have the time. I've never really found the want of it. I think a lot of these young fellows waste a rare lot of time reading when they might be doing something useful.

1ST CHURCHWARDEN: But don't you want to know the news?

ALBERT: No, m'lord, I seem to manage very well without, and of late years now they've all these pictures in the papers I get to know what's going on pretty well.

GENERAL: Don't you ever want to write a letter?

ALBERT: The lady I lodge with is quite a scholar and if I want to write a letter she writes it for me, sir. It's not as if I was a betting man.

The two churchwardens give the vicar a troubled glance and then look down at the table.

VICAR: Well, Foreman, I've talked the matter over with these gentlemen, and they quite agree with me that the situation is impossible. At a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, we cannot have a verger who can neither read nor write.

ALBERT (*surprised*): No, sir?

VICAR: No, Foreman. Please understand, I have no complaint against you. You do your work quite satisfactorily. I have the highest opinion both of your character and of your capacity, but we haven't the right to take the risk of some accident that might happen owing to your lamentable ignorance. It's a matter of prudence as well of principle.

DISSOLVE

6. *Interior Foreman's Kitchen. Day.*

Albert and Emma. Emma has given him a cup of tea.

ALBERT: I never took to him—not from the first. They made a great mistake ever giving him St. Peter's.

EMMA: Didn't the others say nothing?

ALBERT: No—he jockeyed them into it—but I could see they didn't like it.

EMMA: So I should hope.

ALBERT: He nagged them into it, that's what he did. Mark my words.

EMMA: Are you going to let yourself be put upon without making a fuss?

ALBERT: I don't know, Mrs. Brown. I have me pride—even if I can't read or write.

EMMA: What are you going to do?

ALBERT: Sleep on it and decide to-morrow.

DISSOLVE

7. *Exterior St. Peter's Church. Day.*

Foreman walks through the churchyard and lets himself in by the vestry door with a key.

DISSOLVE

8. *Interior Vestry. Day.*

Foreman is dusting the table when the vicar makes a brisk entrance into the room.

VICAR: Ah! Good morning, Foreman!

ALBERT: Good morning, sir.

VICAR: I've some good news for you. I met Mrs. Fitzwilliam just now. She says she'll have the new altar cloth ready by Friday.

ALBERT: About time too, sir. She's been promising it ever since Easter.

VICAR: Well, now we shall have it for Whitsun. We should be thankful for small mercies.

ALBERT: Yes, sir.

The vicar sits down and looks at Albert with his bright piercing eyes.

VICAR: Well, now, Foreman. Have you thought over our little talk yesterday?

ALBERT: Yes, sir.

VICAR: Well?

ALBERT: I'm very sorry, sir. I'm afraid it's no good.

VICAR: Oh, come now—that's not the right spirit.

ALBERT: I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks, sir.

I've lived a good many years without knowing how to read and write and without wishing to praise myself, I don't mind saying, I've done my duty in that state of life in which it has pleased a merciful providence to place me and if I *could* learn now, I don't know as I'd want to.

VICAR: I see. You've quite made up your mind?

ALBERT: Quite, sir.

VICAR: In that case, I'm afraid you'll have to go.

ALBERT: Yes, sir. I quite understand. I shall be happy to hand in my resignation as soon as you've found someone to take my place.

TRIO

VICAR: Very well, Foreman. That will be all for to-day.

ALBERT: Thank you, sir.

Albert goes out, leaving the vicar looking very tight-lipped.

DISSOLVE

NARRATOR: Albert had never troubled with such questions before. The vergers of St. Peter's, like the Popes in Rome, were there for life. He had saved a tidy sum but not enough to live on without doing something. It occurred to him now that a cigarette would comfort him, but his packet was empty. He decided not to take his usual way home but wandered into a street in search of a tobacconist. It was a long street, but he couldn't find a shop that sold cigarettes. There was no doubt about it, he would have to go home without one.

9. *Exterior St. Peter's Church. Day.*

Albert comes out of the vestry door, puts on his hat and walks through the churchyard out into the square.

DISSOLVE

10. *Exterior Neville Square. Day.*

Albert scrolls into the square and finding a seat, sits down meditatively. He is restless. St. Peter's clock chimes the half-hour. He checks it with his watch then rises and walks out of the gardens into the street.

DISSOLVE

11. *Exterior London Street. Day.*

Albert walks slowly along the street with a heavy heart. He does not know what to do with himself and aimlessly turns a corner without looking where he is going.

DISSOLVE

12. *Exterior London Street. Day.*

Albert, deep in thought, wanders along, hands in his pockets. The neighbourhood is not quite as select as Neville Square. He suddenly feels the need for a smoke and pulls a packet out of his pocket, only to find that it is empty of cigarettes. He throws it away in disgust, then starts to look for a tobacconist's. It is a long street in which he finds himself, but he reaches the end of this without seeing a single shop selling cigarettes.

13. *The Parlour of the house in which Foreman lodges.*

Mrs. Brown, Foreman's landlady, her daughter Glad, Glad's young man, Ted Nichols, three or four friends are there. There are bottles of beer about. One girl is at the piano, and they are all singing a popular song of a good many years back. We are introduced to this scene through the door as Foreman walks in.

ALBERT: What's going on?

MRS. BROWN: Ssh! (They stop singing.) It's Glad. She's engaged.

ALBERT: Fancy that now. Who's the lucky fellow?

GLAD: Why, Ted, of course.

ALBERT: So you've caught him at last, have you?

I never thought he had got much of a chance.

GLAD: I like that. He's been after me for months.

TED: That's right. And we're celebrating, see?

Have a glass of beer, Mr. Foreman?

ALBERT: No, I don't think I will, thanks.

TED: Oh, come on.

ALBERT: I'm just going up to my room. I'll join you presently.

As he goes out the girl at the piano strikes up the Wedding March.

DISSOLVE

14. *Interior Foreman's bedroom.*
Foreman is sitting moodily in his bedroom. The sound of singing and playing downstairs is vaguely heard. There is a knock at the door.

ALBERT: Come in.

Mrs. Brown, comes in.

MRS. BROWN: Oh, I am sorry, Mr. Foreman. I knew it the moment you came in. It's that vicar, isn't it?

ALBERT: Given me the sack, he has. After seventeen years.

MRS. BROWN: Whatever will you do now?

ALBERT: I don't know exactly—but I got a sort of idea on the way home. Something funny happened. I wanted a packet of fags and I had to walk over half a mile down one street before I found a tobacconist's.

MRS. BROWN: What's so funny about that?

ALBERT: Well, I can't be the only chap as walks along that street and wants a fag, can I?

MRS. BROWN: Don't ask me.

ALBERT: I shouldn't wonder but what a fellow might do very well with a little shop there. Tobacco and sweets, y'know. I've got a bit of money saved up. I've got half a mind to buy a little shop and see what happens.

MRS. BROWN: You do have ideas, Mr. Foreman, I must say.

ALBERT: And that's not the only one. I've got another. What about you now that Glad's going to be married?

MRS. BROWN: Ted'll come and live here of course. Glad's got her own room. It only means getting a double bed.

ALBERT: That'll make trouble, that will. A young

fellow like Ted, he doesn't want his mother-in-law living in the house. I'll tell you what you ought to do, you ought to marry again, Mrs. Brown.

MRS. BROWN: Who'd want to marry an old woman like me?

ALBERT: I would.

MRS. BROWN: Don't talk so silly. An old bachelor like you and me a widow all these years. You're out of your mind.

ALBERT: Don't you believe it. I'll run the tobacco side of the business and you'll run the sweets. See?

MRS. BROWN: I don't know if I'm standing on my head or my heels.

ALBERT: Make up your mind, Mrs. Brown.

She gives him a smile, half shy, half sly.

MRS. BROWN: My name's Emma, Mr. Foreman.

ALBERT: That's good enough for me. How about a kiss?

MRS. BROWN: I haven't been kissed like that since my poor husband passed away.

ALBERT: Not many widows can say that, I lay.

He gives her a good hearty kiss.

ALBERT: Come on, let's go and tell the others. And to-morrow we'll go looking for a shop.

MRS. BROWN: What a row they're making down there. What are they up to?

DISSOLVE

Interior. The Parlour.

The chairs and tables have been pushed aside and the young folk are all dancing.

ALBERT: Stop the music. I've got an announcement to make. I've offered my hand and heart to Mrs. Brown and what did Mrs. Brown say? She said O.K.

GLAD: Ma!

TED: Cheers.

They all cry hip, hip, hooray.

ALL: Hooray. Hooray. Hooray.

The girl at the piano starts thumping out a popular tune of the day. Albert seizes Emma and they begin to dance with every kind of fantastic step Albert can think of. The rest of the party sing and clap their hands.

DISSOLVE

NARRATOR: The next day, Albert and Emma went along the street and by good luck, found a little shop to let that looked as though it would exactly suit them. Twenty-four hours later they had taken it, and within a month Albert Foreman was set up in business as tobacconist and newsagent.

16. *Exterior London Street. Day.*

This is the same long, crowded street, which Albert trudged from end to end the day before. He now comes from behind camera and walks away down past the shops, looking at everyone as he passes. But this time he is accompanied by Emma.

17. *Exterior Shop. Day.*

Albert pauses in front of a dilapidated, broken-down empty shop up for sale. He looks at Emma. She shakes her head and they continue on their way.

18. *Exterior Street. Day.*

Much further along the street at the corner of a little alleyway which runs at right angles to the main road is a small double-fronted shop, with a door facing out towards the street at the point of a triangle. It is empty. Emma stops suddenly and jerks Albert to a standstill. They both stare at it and then at each other. They turn away. Camera holds on the

faded inscription above the shop windows giving the name of the previous owner and his business, then this fades out and another inscription in fresh gilt lettering fades in:

ALBERT FOREMAN

Tobacconist—Newsagent—Confectioner

DISSOLVE

19. *Interior Shop. Day.*

Emma, now Mrs. Foreman, is behind the counter. Foreman is just finishing taking down the shutters. He comes in and looks round.

ALBERT: And very nice, too.

EMMA: All we want now is a few customers.

ALBERT: Give them time, Emma. Can't expect to do a lot of business first day we open.

EMMA: Look, there's someone at the window.

ALBERT: Only one of them window shoppers.
(*The man walks on.*) I told you so.

EMMA: I'm as nervous as the day we were married, Mr. Foreman.

ALBERT: Not so much of this Mr. Foreman. We've been married a month and it's high time you called me by my first name. And that's Albert.

EMMA: I know it is. The fact is I've called you Mr. Foreman for eleven years and I can't get out of the habit of it now. I expect I shall go on calling you Mr. Foreman till the day I bury you.

ALBERT: All right, have it your own way. All I can say is, it'd sound a bit funny if someone heard you saying to me in the middle of the night, get on your own side of the bed, Mr. Foreman, you'll have me on the floor next.

EMMA: I don't anticipate anyone being in my bedroom in the middle of the night, Mr. Foreman,

and I shouldn't have thought you did either.

A small boy comes in.

BOY: Pennyworth of suckers, please.

ALBERT: Got a penny? *(The little boy opens a grubby hand and shows it.)*

ALBERT: Give the gentleman a pennyworth of suckers, Emma.

She puts the sweets in a little bag and the boy gives her the penny.

ALBERT: And there's a tanner for you.

BOY: For me? What for?

ALBERT: For nothing. Because you're our first customer. Now run along and tell your friends.
(The boy goes out.)

EMMA: That's a fine way to make money, I must say.

ALBERT: Give me that penny. You think it's just a penny, don't you? Well, it isn't. Where's the hammer?

EMMA: Whatever are you going to do now?

ALBERT: Here's a nail. I'm going to nail it down on the counter. *(He does so.)* And when we've made our pile, I'll have it mounted in diamonds and you'll wear it as a brooch.

DISSOLVE

20. *Interior. The kitchen at the back of the shop.*

The radio is going. Foreman is smoking his pipe and Emma is laying the table.

EMMA: They're late.

ALBERT: Who's late?

EMMA: Glad and Ted. I told you they was coming to supper. *(A bell rings.)*

EMMA: That's them.

ALBERT: I'll go and open the door.

He goes out. Emma turns off the radio. She puts a piece of

cold mutton on the table and takes out of the oven some baked potatoes. Glad and Ted come in with Foreman.

GLAD: Hallo, Ma.

EMMA: Hallo, dear. Evening, Ted. Sit down at the table all of you. Supper's just ready.

ALBERT: For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful. Though I must say there are things I'm more thankful for than cold mutton.

EMMA (*sitting down*): His lordship's getting quite fancy in his old age.

During the dialogue she carves the mutton and hands out a potato to each. Foreman opens bottles of beer.

EMMA: Why, what's the matter with you, Glad? You looks as if you'd been crying.

ALBERT: So you do, Glad. Ted been knocking you about?

TED: That I haven't.

ALBERT: What's the trouble then?

TED: She's expecting.

ALBERT: I know that. That's nothing to cry about.

GLAD: Tell them, Ted.

TED: I've got the sack.

EMMA: Oh, Ted.

GLAD: There's me expecting and no money coming in. I don't know what we're going to do.

ALBERT (*with a grin*): I do. Now stop crying, Glad, and just listen to me. We haven't done so badly since we opened the shop. In fact we've made a nice little profit. If we've made a success of this shop there's no reason why we shouldn't make a success of another.

EMMA: You can't do a thing like that. You're out of your mind.

ALBERT: No, I'm not. I'll take another shop

and put Ted and Glad in to manage it.

GLAD: Oh, Dad, you wouldn't do that. Not really, would you?

ALBERT: And I'll tell you another thing. When the baby's born we'll have a slap-up christening at St. Peter's, Neville Square.

DISSOLVE

21. *Exterior London Street. Day*

Foreman and Emma are walking along a deserted road on a Sunday morning. We see them look at one shop they like, and they obviously decide this is the one for them.

DISSOLVE

22. *Interior. St. Peter's, Neville Square.*

The vicar in his surplice. The verger who has taken Foreman's place. Foreman in a tail-coat, with a top hat in his hand. Ted and the godfathers in their Sunday suits, with bowlers. Emma, Glad, the godmother and one or two friends in all their best.

THE VICAR (*the end of the service*): . . . as soon as he can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and be further instructed in the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose. Now will the parents and godparents come to the vestry.

The organ plays a voluntary very softly. The party starts to go towards the door.

THE VICAR: Foreman, isn't it?

ALBERT: Yes, sir.

THE VICAR: I thought it must be. But I hardly recognised you.

ALBERT: When I do a thing I like to do it in style, sir.

THE VICAR: Getting on all right, are you?

ALBERT: I'm not complaining, sir. Seeing as it's an occasion like, I thought perhaps you wouldn't mind if I gave something for the poor and needy of this parish.

THE VICAR: Of course I wouldn't mind.

ALBERT: Thank you, sir.

Foreman takes out his wallet and hands to the vicar ten five pound notes. The vicar is more and more taken aback as they are given to him one by one.

ALBERT: Fifty pounds, sir. Only a trifle, but they say every little helps.

He turns from the vicar and slips a pound note into the verger's hand.

DISSOLVE

23. *Montage.*

NARRATOR: Albert's second shop, like the first, had been a success. It now occurred to him that if he could run two, he could run half a dozen, so he and Emma began walking about London, and whenever they found a long street and no tobacconist's, and a shop to let, they took it. In the course of ten years he had acquired no less than ten shops, and he was making money hand over fist. He went round to all of them himself every Monday, collected the week's takings and took them to the Bank. One day, he was making his usual call . . .

DISSOLVE

A number of short scenes showing Albert acquiring several small shops in different parts of London during the next few years.

24. *Interior. The Bank.*

Albert puts his bag down on the counter.

CLERK: Good morning, Mr. Foreman. Regular as clockwork, you are.

ALBERT: That's right. I have no patience with them fellows as keeps their money under the bed. Asking for trouble, I call it.

CLERK: The manager would like to see you before you go. He said I was to let him know when you came in.

ALBERT (*startled*): Why, what's the matter? Nothing wrong, is there?

CLERK: No, of course not. He only wants to have a word or two with you.

ALBERT: Well, banks do go bust, don't they?

CLERK: Not this one, Mr. Foreman. I think he's free now. I'll just go and see.

The clerk disappears and in a moment opens the door of the manager's room.

CLERK: Come in, Mr. Foreman.

DISSOLVE

25. *Interior Manager's Office.*

The Manager gets up when Albert comes in and shakes him warmly by the hand.

MANAGER: Good morning, Mr. Foreman. I've been expecting you. Regular as clockwork, aren't you?

ALBERT (*suspiciously*): That's what the fellow outside said.

MANAGER: Sit down, won't you?

ALBERT: Thanks.

MANAGER: Have a cigarette.

ALBERT: No thanks. I don't smoke them now. I sell them.

MANAGER: And from what I know you make a very good thing out of it.

ALBERT: I'm not complaining.

MANAGER: Now, Mr. Foreman, I want to have a talk with you about the money you've got on deposit with us. Do you know exactly how much it is?

ALBERT: Not within a pound or two, sir. But I've got a pretty rough idea.

MANAGER: Apart from what you've paid in this morning it's something over thirty thousand pounds. That's a very large sum and I should have thought you'd do better to invest it.

ALBERT: I wouldn't want to take no risks.

MANAGER: Quite right too. We'll make you out a list of absolutely safe securities. Sound industrials. They'll bring you in a better rate of interest than we can possibly afford to give you.

ALBERT (*with a slight frown*): I've never had anything to do with stocks and shares.

MANAGER: We'll attend to everything. All you'll have to do is just to sign the transfers.

ALBERT: How should I know what I was signing?

MANAGER (*a trifle sharply*): You can read, I suppose?

ALBERT (*with a disarming smile*): Well, sir, that's just it. I can't. I know it sounds funny like, but there it is. I can't read or write, only my name.

The manager is so surprised that he jumps out of his chair.

MANAGER: That's the most extraordinary thing I ever heard.

ALBERT: You see, it's like this, sir. I never had the opportunity till I was too old, and then somehow I wouldn't. I got obstinate like.

The manager stares at him as though he were a prehistoric monster.

TRIO

MANAGER: And do you mean to say that you've built up this important business and amassed a fortune of over thirty thousand pounds without being able to read or write? Good heavens man, what would you be now if you *had* been able to?

ALBERT (*with a little smile*): I can tell you that, sir.

I'd be verger at St. Peter's, Neville Square.

As he looks up with his disarming smile

FADE OUT

THE END

★

TRIO

★

MR.
KNOW-ALL



I was prepared to dislike Max Kelada even before I knew him. The war had just finished and the passenger traffic in the ocean-going liners was heavy. Accommodation was very hard to get and you had to put up with whatever the agents chose to offer you. You could not hope for a cabin to yourself and I was thankful to be given one in which there were only two berths. But when I was told the name of my companion my heart sank. It suggested closed port-holes and the night air rigidly excluded. It was bad enough to share a cabin for fourteen days with anyone (I was going from San Francisco to Yokohama), but I should have looked upon it with less dismay if my fellow-passenger's name had been Smith or Brown.

When I went on board I found Mr. Kelada's luggage already below. I did not like the look of it; there were too many labels on the suitcases, and the wardrobe trunk was too big. He had unpacked his toilet things, and I observed that he was a patron of the excellent Monsieur Coty; for I saw on the washing-stand his scent, his hair-wash and his brilliantine. Mr. Kelada's brushes, ebony with his monogram in gold, would have been all the better for a scrub. I did not at all like Mr. Kelada. I made my way into the smoking-room. I called for a pack of cards and began to play patience. I had scarcely started before a man came up to me and asked me if he was right in thinking my name was so-and-so.

"I am Mr. Kelada," he added, with a smile that showed a row of flashing teeth, and sat down.

"Oh, yes, we're sharing a cabin, I think."

"Bit of luck, I call it. You never know who you're going

to be put in with. I was jolly glad when I heard you were English. I'm all for us English sticking together when we're abroad, if you understand what I mean."

I blinked.

"Are you English?" I asked, perhaps tactlessly.

"Rather. You don't think I look like an American, do you? British to the backbone, that's what I am."

To prove it, Mr. Kelada took out of his pocket a passport and airily waved it under my nose.

King George has many strange subjects. Mr. Kelada was short and of a sturdy build, clean-shaven and dark-skinned, with a fleshy, hooked nose and very large, lustrous and liquid eyes. His long black hair was sleek and curly. He spoke with a fluency in which there was nothing English and his gestures were exuberant. I felt pretty sure that a closer inspection of that British passport would have betrayed the fact that Mr. Kelada was born under a bluer sky than is generally seen in England.

"What will you have?" he asked me.

I looked at him doubtfully. Prohibition was in force and to all appearances the ship was bone-dry. When I am not thirsty I do not know which I dislike more, ginger-ale or lemon-squash. But Mr. Kelada flashed an oriental smile at me.

"Whisky and soda or a dry Martini, you have only to say the word."

From each of his hip-pockets he fished a flask and laid them on the table before me. I chose the Martini, and calling the steward he ordered a tumbler of ice and a couple of glasses.

"A very good cocktail," I said.

"Well, there are plenty more where that came from, and if you've got any friends on board, you tell them you've got a pal who's got all the liquor in the world."

Mr. Kelada was chatty. He talked of New York and of San

Francisco. He discussed plays, pictures, and politics. He was patriotic. The Union Jack is an impressive piece of drapery, but when it is flourished by a gentleman from Alexandria or Beirut, I cannot but feel that it loses somewhat in dignity. Mr. Kelada was familiar. I do not wish to put on airs, but I cannot help feeling that it is seemly in a total stranger to put mister before my name when he addresses me. Mr. Kelada, doubtless to set me at my ease, used no such formality. I did not like Mr. Kelada. I had put aside the cards when he sat down, but now thinking that for this first occasion our conversation had lasted long enough, I went on with my game.

"The three on the four," said Mr. Kelada.

There is nothing more exasperating when you are playing patience than to be told where to put the card you have turned up before you have had a chance to look for yourself.

"It's coming out, it's coming out," he cried. "The ten on the knave."

With rage and hatred in my heart I finished. Then he seized the pack.

"Do you like card tricks?"

"No, I hate card tricks," I answered.

"Well, I'll just show you this one."

He showed me three. Then I said I would go down to the dining-room and get my seat at table.

"Oh, that's all right," he said. "I've already taken a seat for you. I thought that as we were in the same state-room we might just as well sit at the same table."

I did not like Mr. Kelada.

I not only shared a cabin with him and ate three meals a day at the same table, but I could not walk round the deck without his joining me. It was impossible to snub him. It never occurred to him that he was not wanted. He was certain that you were as glad to see him as he was to see you.

In your own house you might have kicked him downstairs and slammed the door in his face without the suspicion dawning on him that he was not a welcome visitor. He was a good mixer, and in three days knew everyone on board! He ran everything. He managed the sweeps, conducted the auctions, collected money for prizes at the sports, got up quoit and golf matches, organised the concert and arranged the fancy dress ball. He was everywhere and always. He was certainly the best-hated man in the ship. We called him Mr. Know-All, even to his face. He took it as a compliment. But it was at meal times that he was most intolerable. For the better part of an hour then he had us at his mercy. He was hearty, jovial, loquacious and argumentative. He knew everything better than anybody else, and it was an affront to his overweening vanity that you should disagree with him. He would not drop a subject, however unimportant, till he had brought you round to his way of thinking. The possibility that he could be mistaken never occurred to him. He was the chap who knew. We sat at the doctor's table. Mr. Kelada would certainly have had it all his own way, for the doctor was lazy and I was frigidly indifferent, except for a man called Ramsay who sat there also. He was as dogmatic as Mr. Kelada and resented bitterly the Levantine's cocksureness. The discussions they had were acrimonious and interminable.

Ramsay was in the American Consular Service, and was stationed at Kobe. He was a great heavy fellow from the Middle West, with loose fat under a tight skin, and he bulged out of his ready-made clothes. He was on his way back to resume his post, having been on a flying visit to New York to fetch his wife who had been spending a year at home. Mrs. Ramsay was a very pretty little thing, with pleasant manners and a sense of humour. The Consular Service is ill paid, and she was dressed always very simply; but she knew how to wear her clothes. She achieved an effect of quiet distinction. I should not have paid any particular attention to

her but that she possessed a quality that may be common enough in women, but nowadays is not obvious in their demeanour. You could not look at her without being struck by her modesty. It shone in her like a flower on a coat.

One evening at dinner the conversation by chance drifted to the subject of pearls. There had been in the papers a good deal of talk about the culture pearls which the cunning Japanese were making, and the doctor remarked that they must inevitably diminish the value of real ones. They were very good already; they would soon be perfect. Mr. Kelada, as was his habit, rushed the new topic. He told us all that was to be known about pearls. I do not believe Ramsay knew anything about them at all, but he could not resist the opportunity to have a fling at the Levantine, and in five minutes we were in the middle of a heated argument. I had seen Mr. Kelada vehement and voluble before, but never so voluble and vehement as now. At last something that Ramsay said stung him, for he thumped the table and shouted:

"Well, I ought to know what I am talking about. I'm going to Japan just to look into this Japanese pearl business. I'm in the trade and there's not a man in it who won't tell you that what I say about pearls goes. I know all the best pearls in the world, and what I don't know about pearls isn't worth knowing.

Here was news for us, for Mr. Kelada, with all his loquacity, had never told anyone what his business was. We only knew vaguely that he was going to Japan on some commercial errand. He looked round the table triumphantly.

"They'll never be able to get a culture pearl that an expert like me can't tell with half an eye." He pointed to a chain that Mrs. Ramsay wore. "You take my word for it, Mrs. Ramsay, that chain you're wearing will never be worth a cent less than it is now."

Mrs. Ramsay in her modest way flushed a little and slipped the chain inside her dress. Ramsay leaned forward. He gave us all a look and a smile flickered in his eyes.

"That's a pretty chain of Mrs. Ramsay's, isn't it?"

"I noticed it at once," answered Mr. Kelada. "Gee, I said to myself, those are pearls all right."

"I didn't buy it myself, of course. I'd be interested to know how much you think it cost."

"Oh, in the trade somewhere round fifteen thousand dollars. But if it was bought on Fifth Avenue I shouldn't be surprised to hear that anything up to thirty thousand was paid for it."

Ramsay smiled grimly.

"You'll be surprised to hear that Mrs. Ramsay bought that string at a department store the day before we left New York, for eighteen dollars."

Mr. Kelada flushed.

"Rot. It's not only real, but it's as fine a string for its size as I've ever seen."

"Will you bet on it? I'll bet you a hundred dollars it's imitation."

"Done."

"Oh, Elmer, you can't bet on a certainty," said Mrs. Ramsay.

She had a little smile on her lips and her tone was gently deprecating.

"Can't I? If I get a chance of easy money like that I should be all sorts of a fool not to take it."

"But how can it be proved?" she continued. "It's only my word against Mr. Kelada's."

"Let me look at the chain, and if it's imitation I'll tell you quickly enough. I can afford to lose a hundred dollars," said Mr. Kelada.

"Take it off, dear. Let the gentleman look at it as much as he wants."

Mrs. Ramsay hesitated a moment. She put her hands to the clasp.

"I can't undo it," she said. "Mr. Kelada will just have to take my word for it."

I had a sudden suspicion that something unfortunate was about to occur, but I could think of nothing to say.

Ramsay jumped up.

"I'll undo it."

He handed the chain to Mr. Kelada. The Levantine took a magnifying glass from his pocket and closely examined it. A smile of triumph spread over his smooth and swarthy face. He handed back the chain. He was about to speak. Suddenly he caught sight of Mrs. Ramsay's face. It was so white that she looked as though she were about to faint. She was staring at him with wide and terrified eyes. They held a desperate appeal; it was so clear that I wondered why her husband did not see it.

Mr. Kelada stopped with his mouth open. He flushed deeply. You could almost see the effort he was making over himself.

"I was mistaken," he said. "It's a very good imitation, but of course as soon as I looked through my glass I saw that it wasn't real. I think eighteen dollars is just about as much as the damned thing's worth."

He took out his pocket-book and from it a hundred-dollar bill. He handed it to Ramsay without a word.

"Perhaps that'll teach you not to be so cocksure another time, my young friend," said Ramsay as he took the note.

I noticed that Mr. Kelada's hands were trembling.

The story spread over the ship as stories do, and he had to put up with a good deal of chaff that evening. It was a fine joke that Mr. Know-All had been caught out. But Mrs. Ramsay retired to her state-room with a headache.

Next morning I got up and began to shave. Mr. Kelada lay on his bed smoking a cigarette. Suddenly there was a small

scraping sound and I saw a letter pushed under the door. I opened the door and looked out. There was nobody there. I picked up the letter and saw that it was addressed to Max Kelada. The name was written in block letters. I handed it to him.

"Who's this from?" He opened it. "Oh!"

He took out of the envelope, not a letter, but a hundred-dollar bill. He looked at me and again he reddened. He tore the envelope into little bits and gave them to me.

"Do you mind just throwing them out of the port-hole?"

I did as he asked, and then I looked at him with a smile.

"No one likes being made to look a perfect damned fool," he said.

"Were the pearls real?"

"If I had a pretty little wife I shouldn't let her spend a year in New York while I stayed at Kobe," said he.

At that moment I did not entirely dislike Mr. Kelada. He reached out for his pocket-book and carefully put in it the hundred-dollar note.



★ T R I O ★

MR.
KNOW-ALL



Adapted for the Screen from the Story by
W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

MR. KNOW-ALL

List of Cast

<i>Artiste</i>	<i>Character</i>
WILFRID HYDE WHITE	GRAY
NIGEL PATRICK	MAX KELADA
NAUNTON WAYNE	RAMSAY
ANNE CRAWFORD	MRS. RAMSAY
CLIVE MORTON	SHIP'S CAPTAIN
DENNIS HARKIN	CAPTAINS STEWARD
BILL TRAVERS	FELLOWS
MICHAEL MEDWIN	STEWARD TO GRAY AND KELADA
JOHN WARREN	MAN (Ship's Smoking-Room)
ANTHONY STEEL	TRAVEL AGENCY CLERK

1. *Mr. Somerset Maugham on the screen introduces the story in the following words . . .*

MR. MAUGHAM: *Mr. Know-All*, I believe, is a story of my own invention, but I wouldn't go into the witness box in a court of law and take my oath on it. I think I might parody a statement of Dr. Johnson's and say that if a story is good it is unlikely to be new, and if it's new it's unlikely to be good.

DISSOLVE

2. *On the screen appears the book open at the first page of the story, which the narrator reads—*

NARRATOR: I was prepared to dislike Max Kelada even before I knew him. The war had just finished and the passenger traffic in the ocean-going liners was heavy. Accommodation was very hard to get and you had to put up with whatever the agents chose to offer you. . . .

DISSOLVE

3. *Interior Travel Agency. Day.*
A travel agency in London. It is full of people crowding the counters, where harassed clerks are doing their best to attend to them.
A woman is standing by a clerk. She bends down to pick up case and moves across to Far East counter and pauses beside another woman, collecting pamphlets from the desk. GRAY is at the counter and a clerk is just handing him his tickets and labels.

CLERK: I'm sorry, Mr. Gray. I'm afraid it's only a single berth in a cabin for two.

GRAY: That's all right, my boy. Thank you very much for the trouble you've taken. I know how difficult it is. Good-bye.

CLERK: Good-bye.

He takes the tickets and goes.

CLERK: Who's next?

KELADA (*appearing from nowhere*): Me!

He is at once challenged by a man (Ramsay) who has been standing just behind Gray—an Englishman in a dark suit and an "Anthony Eden" hat.

RAMSAY: I think I'm next.

KELADA: Yes, next after me. (*To clerk.*) My name's Kelada. K-E-L-A-D-A. You've got me down for a berth on the *Queen of the Indies*.

RAMSAY (*persisting*): My name is Ramsay.

CLERK: One at a time, please.

KELADA: K-E-L-A-D-A, British subject.

RAMSAY: I was before this gentleman.

CLERK (*to Kelada*): Is that right?

KELADA: Gentleman! After that compliment what can I say? (*To Ramsay.*) Feller, the floor is yours.

RAMSAY: My name is Ramsay. You've had a message about me from the Colonial Office.

CLERK: Oh, yes, Mr. Ramsay. You're going to Aden.

RAMSAY: That's right. With Mrs. Ramsay.

CLERK: Excuse me a moment. I'll get your tickets.

He goes out of the scene.

KELADA: V.I.P. I suppose?

RAMSAY: No. Just a civil servant.

KELADA: Taking your wife to Aden?

RAMSAY: Why not?

KELADA: That climate!

RAMSAY: My wife's had two years on her own in London already.

KELADA: Okay, feller—she's your wife.

The clerk hurries back and hands Ramsay tickets and labels.

CLERK: Here you are, sir. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay.
Cabin 102—A. Deck.

RAMSAY: Thank you. Good morning.

CLERK: Good morning.

He nods to Kelada and goes.

KELADA: See you on board. Good morning. (*Ramsay behaves as though he hasn't heard this. Kelada turns to the clerk.*) My name's Kelada. You've reserved a berth for me on the *Queen of the Indies* stopping off at Port Said.

CLERK: I'll see what the list says.

He begins to scan the list. Kelada takes a cigar from his waistcoat pocket.

KELADA: Like a cigar?

CLERK: I don't smoke.

KELADA: You don't know what you're missing. I get them special. Same feller that makes them for the Aga Khan and Winnie.

Kelada puts cigar in his mouth.

CLERK: I am sorry, Mr. Kelada, we can't get you on the *Queen of the Indies*.

KELADA: Oh yes, you can.

CLERK: I'm afraid not. There's only one cancelled berth, and there are seven ahead of you on the waiting list.

KELADA: Where's your boss?

CLERK: He can't see you at the moment.

KELADA: Oh, can't he? Where's his office? (*Pointing.*) Over there?

CLERK: He's busy at the moment.

KELADA: So am I. But I can spare him five minutes.
He pushes his way through the crowd.

FADE OUT

4. *Exterior Dock at Tilbury. Day.*

The gangway of a large tropical-style passenger-ship with passengers, porters, delivery boys, friends, officers and crew of the ship forming a ceaseless flow of activity up and down the gangway. Cranes are emptying luggage into the holds; the noise is loud and confused.

DISSOLVE

5. *Interior Gray's Cabin. Day.*

Gray comes in, followed by a steward with luggage.

GRAY: Who am I sharing with?

He looks at a label on a trunk and sees: Max Kelada. Destination: Yokohama.

STEWARD: A Mr. Kelada, sir.

GRAY: Oh, a foreigner?

STEWARD: No, sir. English. At least that's what he says he is.

GRAY (*tipping the steward*): Thank you, steward.

STEWARD: Thank you, sir.

He exits, smiling.

Gray turns and bumps into a huge cabin trunk, labelled Max Kelada, Yokohama. Gray edges round the trunk. More of Mr. Kelada's luggage fills the floor. He steps over some, moves the rest. He then pauses at the washstand. On it are half a dozen expensive toilet bottles; two silver hair brushes monogrammed "K", shaving things etc. They fill the stand. Gray looks at them and shakes his head. Sound of ship's siren, off.

GRAY: Good Heavens!

6. *Exterior Deck. Day.*

We are shooting along the deck and the action is centred on a steward who is calling out

ANNOUNCER: Attention please! All friends of passengers who are not sailing in the ship, would they kindly disembark as the gangway is about to be lowered.

There are a number of people hurrying up and down the gang-way. We pick up Ramsay and Mrs. Ramsay as they walk along, parallel to the rail, waving to someone below on the quay.

7. *Interior Bar. Day.*

This is a long shot seen through a glass door or window. Kelada is inside the bar chatting with the Purser who is showing him a passenger list or table plan or something of the sort. This shot is silent.

8. *Interior Smoking-room. Day.*

Gray walks into the nearly deserted room, sits down near a porthole and takes a pack of patience cards. He begins to play.

9. *Exterior Ship's Siren. Day.*

A thin puff of steam comes from the siren as we hear the sound of the siren again.

DISSOLVE

10. *Exterior Deck. Day.*

The ship is now away from the quay and is beginning to move out to sea. Kelada comes along the deck and turns into the smoking-room.

11. *Interior Ship's Smoking-room. Day.*

Kelada enters and looks about him expansively and amiably. An elderly man walks by him.

KELADA: Nice day.

MAN: Very.

He disappears out of the picture. Kelada sees Gray sitting alone at a table, setting out playing cards in preparation for a game of patience. Kelada's face lights up. He swings round and walks out of scene.

- *Gray is seated at table. He is setting out the playing cards and his attention is absorbed.*

KELADA'S VOICE: Hullo, hullo, hullol
Gray winces and looks up, a look of resigned resentment on his face. Kelada comes into the picture and sits down almost right away.

KELADA: I am Mr. Kelada. I saw you at the agent's yesterday.

GRAY: We're sharing a cabin, I believe.

KELADA: Yes—bit of luck I call it. I'm all for us English sticking together when we're abroad.

GRAY: Are you English, too?

KELADA (*producing and flourishing a British passport*): British to the backbone.

GRAY: I take it you were born under bluer skies than one normally sees in England.

KELADA: I was born in the centre—the very heart of our great Empire.

GRAY (*ironically*): Buckingham Palace?

KELADA: No—but near! A stone's throw away. They used to have to change the guard on tiptoe so as not to wake me up. I was a very delicate child. . . . What's your racket?

GRAY: I beg your pardon?

KELADA: I'm in the precious stone and jewellery business. And I don't mind telling you there's no one in the trade knows more about them than I do.

Gray does not answer, but goes on playing his patience.

KELADA: The three on the four. What did you say your racket was?

GRAY: I didn't say. But if you particularly want to know I'm in the Civil Service.

KELADA: Ground nuts?

GRAY: No. I happen to be an economist.

KELADA: Ah! I heard their finances are not too good in Hong Kong. I suppose you're going there to straighten them out.

GRAY: How did you know I was going to Hong Kong?

KELADA: There's not much I don't know.

Gray gathers up the cards and gets up.

GRAY: I must go along to the dining-room and get my seat at table.

KELADA: Wait a minute. That's all fixed up. As we're sharing a cabin I thought we might just as well sit at the same table. (*Gray's face falls with dismay.*) How about a drink?

GRAY: Not now, thank you. I promised to have one with somebody else.

KELADA: Have one while you're waiting. Steward!

GRAY: Here they are. Hello, Ramsay. See you later.

KELADA: None of that, old chap. Hulloo, Ramsay, remember me? Kelada. We met yesterday at the agency.

RAMSAY: No, I'm sorry, I don't remember you.

KELADA: Don't be silly—of course you do! Mrs. Ramsay, I presume.

MABEL: How d'you do.

KELADA: Have a drink, Mrs. Ramsay.

RAMSAY: We've asked Mr. Gray to have a drink with us.

KELADA: Now you can all have one with me. (*To Gray.*) You can buy the second round. You sit there, Mrs. Ramsay. Steward!

Beaten, the Ramsays sit down.

KELADA: We've got a long trip ahead of us, and the sooner we all get to know each other the better. Mrs. Ramsay how d'you like the ship. Could be worse, eh?

MABEL: It seems quite comfortable.

KELADA: Not a bad crowd aboard for this time of year.

MABEL: We haven't really met anybody yet.

KELADA: If there's anyone you want to meet, just tell me and I'll fix it up in a jiffy.

RAMSAY: I don't think we need trouble you.

KELADA: You're going to Aden, aren't you? You won't like it. Very hot. I know it well.

GRAY: There's very little Mr. Kelada *doesn't* know well.

KELADA: That's right. *Steward!*
The steward appears.

DISSOLVE

- 11a. *Exterior Sea. Day.*
A shot of the wake of the ship.

12. *Exterior Deck. Day.*
The Ramsays are by the rail looking out to sea. They turn and walk along the deck. As they do so, they meet Gray who is walking in the opposite direction. They greet one another cordially.

GRAY: Hello.

MRS. RAMSAY: Hello!

GRAY: Morning!

RAMSAY: Good morning. How's your friend Kelada?

GRAY: I shall probably have to murder him before this trip's through.

MABEL: He's awful, isn't he?

GRAY: Awful.

MABEL: Oh, dear, here he comes. Come along darling.
They walk away hurriedly as Kelada comes up to Gray.

KELADA: Hulloo, feller. (*To woman in chair.*) Browning up? (*To Gray.*) Getting a breath of fresh air? I kept your ticket for to-day's sweep.

GRAY: I don't really want one.

KELADA: Must be a sport. You never know, you

might win it. Oh, and I want a couple of bucks off you for the sports.

GRAY: A couple of what?

KELADA: Ten shillings. I got it all organised. Would you believe it, they didn't want to have a fancy dress ball? I soon talked them into it. (*To two passengers passing.*) I've got you down for the ship's concert. Hello, Bewley,

BEWLEY: Oh yes. But I shall have to try my songs over with a pianist first.

KELADA: Of course, of course, of course. (*To Gray.*) He's a singer. Can you play the piano?

GRAY: Yes. I can a bit as a matter of fact.

KELADA: Will you play for him?

GRAY: No.

KELADA: England expects that every man on board will do his duty. I'm going to do card tricks.

GRAY: There's nothing I dislike more than card tricks.

KELADA: Wait till you see mine. I can make a pack of cards do anything I want. As a matter of fact, I had to give up gambling. It wasn't fair on the other players. I know too much about cards.

GRAY: Mr. Know-All, eh!

KELADA: It's funny how that name's got around. But I ask you, what sort of a trip would it be without me?

GRAY (*sarcastically*): You're certainly the life and soul of the party.

KELADA: I know I am. I'm not conceited, but I am the most popular man in this ship and I can't help knowing it. Come on, let's have a snifter before lunch. (*He takes Gray's arm and hurries him off. As he does so, he shouts:* Steward!

DISSOLVE

13. *Interior Lounge. Night.*

The long room in which the movies are shown. A stage at the end of it. The passengers sit in rows of chairs, the captain in the front row with the Ramsays. Keladu in evening dress on stage with card table. He is bowing and the audience is applauding. He holds up his hand for silence.

KELADA: You think that was clever? You haven't seen anything yet! And now, ladies and gentlemen, for the grand finale. I'm going to show you a trick that only four men in the world can do—and I taught the other three. I need the assistance of two members of the audience and to show I don't mind who they are I'm going to pick them myself. Ah, may I call on you to oblige, Mrs. Ramsay. And you, Mr. Fellows?

MRS. RAMSAY: Oh, no, Mr. Kelada, please!

KELADA: Come along, now don't be shy. There's nothing to be shy about. I'm not shy, am I? *(He starts clapping to egg on the audience.)* Give them a big hand, ladies and gentlemen.

The audience laughs and applauds. Mrs. Ramsay unwillingly, Fellows with a nervous grin, go up on the stage.

DISSOLVE

14. *Exterior Deck. Night.*

The fancy dress ball is taking place under an awning on deck. Gray is watching and we follow his gaze to where Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay are dancing together. She looks exceptionally attractive. Kelada, in some rather foolish costume, pushes through the dancers until he comes close to the Ramsays and then taps Ramsay on the shoulder and cuts in. Ramsay gives way with rather bad grace. Kelada dances vigorously with Mrs. Ramsay, whose husband watches them for a moment and then crosses to them with great determination and cuts

in on Kelada. We go back to Gray. He smiles to himself and turns away.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

15. *Exterior Deck. Night.*

Several nights later. Open on a shot of four men—including Gray and Ramsay—playing bridge. We see them through the open door of the smoking-room. Kelada, crossing the room, stops to look at the play for a moment and then comes out on deck. He glances along the deck and we follow his glance. Mabel, wearing a charming evening dress, is standing on deck, looking at the starry night. Kelada comes up to her.

KELADA: I wondered where you were.

MABEL: It's so hot in there. I thought I'd come out here for a breath of air.

She moves along, but he follows her.

KELADA: Me too. Let's go up to the boat deck.

Huh!

MABEL: Why?

KELADA: Cooler up there. It's quiet and we can have a talk.

MABEL: I'm quite happy down here, thank you.

KELADA (*taking her hand*): That's a nice stone you've got in that ring.

MABEL (*withdrawing her hand*): It's my engagement ring.

KELADA: Let's have a look at it.

MABEL: It wouldn't interest you. It's only a star sapphire, but I happen to like it.

KELADA: I've got some very pretty sapphires in my cabin. Like to see them?

MABEL: I'm afraid they wouldn't interest me.

KELADA: How can you tell till you've seen them? I've got a star sapphire that I think you'd like.

MABEL: I've got no money to spend on things I don't want.

KELADA: I wouldn't want you to buy it. If you like it I'd be glad to give it you.

A moment's pause. She is half amused, half angry.

MABEL: Are you trying to make a pass at me, Mr. Kelada.

KELADA (*not a bit taken aback*): Of course. You can't blame me, can you? You're the best looker I've seen in donkey's years.

MABEL: Mr. Kelada, my husband's a very jealous man. If I told him about this—he would probably—anyway—he wouldn't like it.

KELADA: You wouldn't do that. You're too much of a lady.

MABEL: Would you kindly go away, Mr. Kelada?

KELADA: I haven't offended you, have I?

MABEL: Very much.

KELADA: I can't think why. If a feller falls for you he can't help it, can he? After all, it's rather flattering, you can't deny that.

MABEL (*acidly*): It depends on the feller.

KELADA: I suppose I'm just not your type. Oh well, you can't blame me for trying. If you don't try you don't get, that's what I always say.

MABEL: Well, I suppose you have your triumphs. There's no accounting for taste.

KELADA: No ill feeling?

MABEL: On my part? No, why should there be?

KELADA: That's the spirit. Good night. God bless.
DISSOLVE

16. *Interior. The Ramsays' Cabin. Night.*
The scene starts on a close-up of an invitation card reading:—

The Captain requests the pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay's company for cocktails at eight o'clock this evening.

The camera pulls back to show that the card is on the dressing-table in the Ramsay's cabin, and that Mr. Ramsay is seated in front of the dressing-table making an attempt to tie a dress tie. He gets up and crosses the cabin to his wife, who is doing up her dress.

RAMSAY: Tie my tie, will you, for me, darling?

She proceeds to do so, but he interrupts her by trying to kiss her.

MABEL: Now then. Stand still, silly!

RAMSAY: I can't help it—it's so wonderful to have you again after two whole years away from you.

MABEL (*firting a little*): During which I expect you were consistently unfaithful to me.

RAMSAY: I was not! You're the only girl in the world for me and well you know it. (*She doesn't say anything. He continues.*) You do know it, don't you?

MABEL: Of course. (*Having finished tying the tie.*)

There you are. I shall be ready in a minute.

As she turns away to do so, he grabs her by the arm and says, more seriously:

RAMSAY: You did miss me sometimes?

MABEL: Yes, of course. All the time.

RAMSAY: It was hell for me. I was terrified you'd meet someone you liked better.

MABEL: If I had. What would you have done?

RAMSAY: Killed him. And you.

MABEL (*with a rather uneasy laugh*): Oh dear. I'd better watch my step then, hadn't I?

RAMSAY: You certainly had.

Mabel crosses to the dressing-table, opens the drawer, takes out

a string of pearls and fastens them around her neck. Ramsay, putting on his jacket, comes and stands behind her, looking at her in the mirror.

RAMSAY: Those are new, aren't they?

MABEL (*nodding*): Yes, do you like them?

RAMSAY: They look very expensive. I don't know how you do it on what I give you.

MABEL: They didn't cost much. Eight pounds as a matter of fact.

RAMSAY: Really?

MABEL: Yes. I got them at one of those places in Oxford Street.

RAMSAY: No one would ever know.

MABEL (*getting up*): Well that's a relief, anyhow. Come on! We're late enough already.

DISSOLVE

17. *Interior Captain's Cabin. Night.*

Gray and the Captain are having a drink. The steward enters to announce the Ramsays, who follow him in. The two men get up.

CAPTAIN: Here you are Gray—oh you've got one.

STEWARD: Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay.

CAPTAIN: Glad to see you. You know everybody, don't you? What'll you have?

MABEL: I'd like a dry Martini, please.

RAMSAY: Me, too.

The captain nods to the steward and all sit down.

GRAY (*to the captain*): What time d'you expect to dock?

CAPTAIN: Eleven in the morning. There's nothing much to see, but if you want to go ashore you'll have plenty of time. We shan't sail till five.

GRAY: Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and I were going to have lunch at the Grand, but Kelada wanted us to

join him. We couldn't get out of it so we've decided to stay on board, haven't we?

RAMSAY: Yes.

CAPTAIN: Yes, of course, he's landing. I expect you won't be sorry to be rid of him.

GRAY: I certainly shan't.

CAPTAIN: He has his good points. Those prizes for the fancy dress ball, he bought himself, and the chief steward tells me they cost a packet.

RAMSAY: He's generous. You have to fight him to let you pay for a drink.

CAPTAIN: Yet he's managed to make himself the most unpopular man in this ship.

MABEL: He really is terrible. And you can't snub him, you know.

RAMSAY: You could kick him out of your house and slam the door in his face and it would never occur to him that he wasn't welcome.

CAPTAIN: As he's leaving us to-morrow, I really should have asked him in to cocktails to-night, but I simply couldn't bring myself to. He's quite impossible.

The steward comes in to announce.

STEWARD: Mr. Kelada.

Kelada comes in as bold as brass. There is a moment of confusion.

KELADA: Hello there! Not barging in, am I? The fool of a steward didn't give me your invitation. Cigar?

CAPTAIN: I'm smoking. I'm glad to see you. What'll you have?

KELADA: Scotch and soda. I stick to the liquor of my native heath. Hello, hello, hello.

CAPTAIN: So you're leaving us to-morrow, Mr. Kelada.

KELADA: Best of friends must part, you know I'm

going to Cairo to look at a pearl necklace that one of those pasha fellows is willing to sell provided he can get a good price.

RAMSAY: By the way, aren't these cultured pearls putting you fellows out of business?

KELADA: They'll never do that. They will never affect the market for real ones. As a matter of fact I'm going to Japan to look into the cultured pearl racket.

CAPTAIN: They're darned clever, the Japs. They tell me not even an expert can distinguish real from cultured.

KELADA: That's what they tell you. An expert can see at once and *I'm* an expert.

RAMSAY: You believe in blowing your own trumpet, don't you?

KELADA: What else is a trumpet for? I'm in the trade and what I don't know about pearls isn't worth knowing. They'll never be able to get a cultured pearl that an expert like me can't tell with half an eye. (*He points to the string on Mrs. Ramsay's neck.*) You take my word for it, Mrs. Ramsay, that collar you're wearing will never be worth a penny less than it is now.

Mrs. Ramsay blushes and tries modestly to tuck the string in her dress. Ramsay gives a look round and his eyes begin to smile.

RAMSAY: Yes, nice, isn't it?

KELADA: Nice? I noticed it at once. I said to myself, those pearls are the goods.

RAMSAY: I didn't buy it myself, but I'd be interested to know how much you think they cost.

KELADA: Oh, in the trade, somewhere around fifteen hundred. But if it was bought in Bond Street, I shouldn't be surprised if they asked three thousand.

RAMSAY: Three thousand pounds, eh?

KELADA: That's right—and well worth it.

RAMSAY (*smiling grimly*): You may be interested to hear that my wife bought it in Oxford Street for eight pounds. They're cultured pearls.

KELADA (*flushing*): Don't make me laugh. It's not only real, but it's as fine a string for its size as I've ever seen.

RAMSAY: Will you bet on it?

KELADA: Bet?

RAMSAY: A tanner it's imitation?

KELADA: Done.

MABEL: Oh darling, you can't bet on a certainty.

RAMSAY: If I get a chance to make easy money like this I'd be a fool not to take it.

MABEL (*getting a little confused*): But how can it be proved? It's only my word against Mr. Kelada's.

KELADA (*rising*): Let me look at the pearls, lady. If it's imitation I'll tell you quickly enough. I can afford to lose a tanner!

RAMSAY: Take 'em off, dear. Let the expert examine them.

Mrs. Ramsay hesitates, then puts her hand to the clasp.

MABEL: I can't undo it.

RAMSAY: I'll do it.

He undoes the clasp and hands the string to Kelada.

RAMSAY: There you are.

Kelada takes out a jeweller's glass, puts it in his eye and examines the pearls. He smiles with satisfaction. Mabel is obviously very upset but her husband is too pleased with himself to notice this. But Kelada notices. He is just about to speak when he catches sight of Mabel's distraught face. He hesitates. For a moment he can hardly bear to give up his triumph. Then he hands the string back. With a smile he takes his wallet out of his pocket and gives two fivers to Ramsay.

KELADA: I was mistaken. They're cultured.

RAMSAY (*taking the notes, with a laugh*): If they hadn't been I'd have had quite a serious talk with my wife.

Perhaps that'll teach you not to be so cocksure another time, Mr. Know-All! (*Taking notes.*)

Thank you. Never mind, we all make mistakes.

Kelada merely smiles, blandly, and says nothing. Gray looks at him, rather puzzled.

DISSOLVE

18. *Exterior Sea. Day.*

A sunrise shot.

19. *Interior Ramsay's Cabin. Day.*

The Ramsay's cabin. Ramsay is still fast asleep. Mabel in a dressing-gown gives him a look and slips out.

20. *Interior Deck. Day.*

Mabel comes out from a companion way, looks round to see there's nobody about, and then walks quickly off along the enclosed deck.

21. *Interior Kelada's Cabin. Day.*

Gray and Kelada's cabin. Gray is shaving. Kelada is packing. No words are spoken. There is a small scraping sound and an envelope is pushed under the door.

GRAY: Hulloo, what's that?

He opens the door and looks out. Then he shuts it again, picks up the envelope and looks at it.

GRAY: It's for you.

KELADA: For me? (*He takes the envelope.*)

He opens the envelope and takes out two five pound notes. He sits on his bunk, stuffs the notes into his pocket, tears up the envelopes and passes the pieces to Gray, who is nearer the porthole.

GRAY: The pearls *were* real then?

KELADA: Of course. If you had a pretty little wife like Mrs. Ramsay, would you let her spend two years alone in London while you were in Aden?

GRAY: The Know-All.

KELADA: Call me Max.

FADE OUT

THE END

★ T R I O ★

SANATORIUM



FOR the first six weeks that Ashenden was at the sanatorium he stayed in bed. He saw nobody but the doctor who visited him morning and evening, the nurses who looked after him and the maid who brought him his meals. He had contracted tuberculosis of the lungs and since at the time there were reasons that made it difficult for him to go to Switzerland the specialist he saw in London had sent him up to a sanatorium in the north of Scotland. At last the day came that he had been patiently looking forward to when the doctor told him he could get up; and in the afternoon his nurse, having helped him to dress, took him down to the veranda, placed cushions behind him, wrapped him up in rugs and left him to enjoy the sun that was streaming down from a cloudless sky. It was mid-winter. The sanatorium stood on the top of a hill and from it you had a spacious view of the snow-clad country. There were people lying all along the veranda in deck-chairs, some chatting with their neighbours and some reading. Every now and then one would have a fit of coughing and you noticed that at the end of it he looked anxiously at his handkerchief. Before the nurse left Ashenden she turned with a kind of professional briskness to the man who was lying in the next chair.

"I want to introduce Mr. Ashenden to you," she said. And then to Ashenden: "This is Mr. McLeod. He and Mr. Campbell have been here longer than anyone else."

On the other side of Ashenden was lying a pretty girl, with red hair and bright blue eyes; she had on no make-up, but her lips were very red and the colour on her cheeks was high. It emphasised the astonishing whiteness of her skin. It was

lovely even when you realised that its delicate texture was due to illness. She wore a fur coat and was wrapped up in rugs, so that you could see nothing of her body, but her face was extremely thin, so thin that it made her nose, which wasn't really large, look a trifle prominent. She gave Ashenden a friendly look, but did not speak, and Ashenden, feeling rather shy among all those strange people, waited to be spoken to.

"First time they've let you get up, is it?" said McLeod.

"Yes."

"Where's your room?"

Ashenden told him.

"Small. I know every room in the place. I've been here for seventeen years. I've got the best room here and so I damned well ought to have. Campbell's been trying to get me out of it, he wants it himself, but I'm not going to budge; I've got a right to it, I came here six months before he did."

McLeod, lying there, gave you the impression that he was immensely tall; his skin was stretched tight over his bones, his cheeks and temples hollow, so that you could see the formation of his skull under it; and in that emaciated face, with its great bony nose, the eyes were preternaturally large.

"Seventeen years is a long time," said Ashenden, because he could think of nothing else to say.

"Time passes very quickly. I like it here. At first, after a year or two, I went away in the summer, but I don't any more. It's my home now. I've got a brother and two sisters; but they're married and now they've got families; they don't want me. When you've been here a few years and you go back to ordinary life, you feel a bit out of it, you know. Your pals have gone their own ways and you've got nothing in common with them any more. It all seems an awful rush. Much ado about nothing, that's what it is. It's noisy and stuffy. No, one's better off here. I shan't stir again till they carry me out feet first in my coffin."

The specialist had told Ashenden that if he took care of

himself for a reasonable time he would get well, and he looked at McLeod with curiosity.

"What do you do with yourself all day long?" he asked.

"Do? Having T.B. is a whole time job, my boy. There's my temperature to take and then I weigh myself. I don't hurry over my dressing. I have breakfast. I read the papers and go for a walk. Then I have my rest. I lunch and play bridge. I have another rest and then I dine. I play a bit more bridge and I go to bed. They've got quite a decent library here, we get all the new books, but I don't really have much time for reading. I talk to people. You meet all sorts here, you know. They come and they go. Sometimes they go because they think they're cured, but a lot of them come back, and sometimes they go because they die. I've seen a lot of people out and before I go I expect to see a lot more."

The girl sitting on Ashenden's other side suddenly spoke.

"I should tell you that few persons can get a heartier laugh out of a hearse than Mr. McLeod," she said.

McLeod chuckled.

"I don't know about that, but it wouldn't be human nature if I didn't say to myself: Well, I'm just as glad it's him and not me they're taking for a ride."

It occurred to him that Ashenden didn't know the pretty girl, so he introduced him.

"By the way, I don't think you've met Mr. Ashenden—Miss Bishop. She's English, but not a bad girl."

"How long have *you* been here?" asked Ashenden.

"Only two years. This is my last winter. Dr. Lennox says I shall be all right in a few months and there's no reason why I shouldn't go home."

"Silly, I call it," said McLeod. "Stay where you're well off, that's what I say."

At that moment a man, leaning on a stick, came walking slowly along the veranda.

"Oh, look, there's Major Templeton," said Miss Bishop, a

smile lighting up her blue eyes; and then, as he came up: "I'm glad to see you up again."

"Oh, it was nothing. Only a bit of a cold. I'm quite all right now."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when he began to cough. He leaned heavily on his stick. But when the attack was over he smiled gaily.

"Can't get rid of this damned cough," he said. "Smoking too much. Dr. Lennox says I ought to give it up, but it's no good—I can't."

He was a tall fellow, good-looking in a slightly theatrical way, with a dusky, sallow face, fine very dark eyes and a neat black moustache. He was wearing a fur coat with an Astrakhan collar. His appearance was smart and perhaps a trifle showy. Miss Bishop made Ashenden known to him. Major Templeton said a few civil words in an easy, cordial way, and then asked the girl to go for a stroll with him; he had been ordered to walk to a certain place in the wood behind the sanatorium and back again. McLeod watched them as they sauntered off.

"I wonder if there's anything between those two," he said. "They do say Templeton was a devil with the girls before he got ill."

"He doesn't look up to much in that line just now," said Ashenden.

"You never can tell. I've seen a lot of rum things here in my day. I could tell you no end of stories if I wanted to."

"You evidently do, so why don't you?"

McLeod grinned.

"Well, I'll tell you one. Three or four years ago there was a woman here who was pretty hot stuff. Her husband used to come and see her every other week-end, he was crazy about her, used to fly up from London; but Dr. Lennox was pretty sure she was carrying on with somebody here, but he couldn't find out who. So one night when we'd all gone to bed he

had a thin coat of paint put down just outside her room and next day he had everyone's slippers examined. Neat, wasn't it? The fellow whose slippers had paint on them got the push. Dr. Lennox has to be particular, you know. He doesn't want the place to get a bad name."

"How long has Templeton been here?"

"Three or four months. He's been in bed most of the time. He's for it all right. Ivy Bishop'll be a damned fool if she gets stuck on him. She's got a good chance of getting well. I've seen so many of them, you know, I can tell. When I look at a fellow I make up my mind at once whether he'll get well or whether he won't, and if he won't I can make a pretty shrewd guess how long he'll last. I'm very seldom mistaken. I give Templeton about two years myself."

McLeod gave Ashenden a speculative look and Ashenden, knowing what he was thinking, though he tried to be amused, could not help feeling somewhat concerned. There was a twinkle in McLeod's eyes. He plainly knew what was passing through Ashenden's mind.

"You'll get all right. I wouldn't have mentioned it if I hadn't been pretty sure of that. I don't want Dr. Lennox to hoof me out for putting the fear of God into his bloody patients."

Then Ashenden's nurse came to take him back to bed. Even though he had only sat out for an hour, he was tired, and was glad to find himself once more between the sheets. Dr. Lennox came in to see him in the course of the evening. He looked at his temperature chart.

"That's not so bad," he said.

Dr. Lennox was small, brisk and genial. He was a good enough doctor, an excellent business man, and an enthusiastic fisherman. When the fishing season began he was inclined to leave the care of his patients to his assistants; the patients grumbled a little, but were glad enough to eat the young salmon he brought back to vary their meals. He was

fond of talking, and now, standing at the end of Ashenden's bed, he asked him, in his broad Scots, whether he had got into conversation with any of the patients that afternoon. Ashenden told him the nurse had introduced him to McLeod. Dr. Lennox laughed.

"The oldest living inhabitant. He knows more about the sanatorium and its inmates than I do. How he gets his information I haven't an idea, but there's not a thing about the private lives of anyone under this roof that he doesn't know. There's not an old maid in the place with a keener nose for a bit of scandal. Did he tell you about Campbell?"

"He mentioned him."

"He hates Campbell, and Campbell hates him. Funny, when you come to think of it, those two men, they've been here for seventeen years and they've got about one sound lung between them. They loathe the sight of one another. I've had to refuse to listen to the complaints about one another that they come to me with. Campbell's room is just below McLeod's and Campbell plays the fiddle. It drives McLeod wild. He says he's been listening to the same tunes for fifteen years, but Campbell says McLeod doesn't know one tune from another. McLeod wants me to stop Campbell playing, but I can't do that, he's got a perfect right to play so long as he doesn't play in the silence hours. I've offered to change McLeod's room, but he won't do that. He says Campbell only plays to drive him out of the room because it's the best in the house, and he's damned if he's going to have it. It's queer, isn't it, that two middle-aged men should think it worth while to make life hell for one another. Neither can leave the other alone. They have their meals at the same table, they play bridge together; and not a day passes without a row. Sometimes I've threatened to turn them both out if they don't behave like sensible fellows. That keeps them quiet for a bit. They don't want to go. They've been here so long, they've got no one any more who gives a damn for them, and they

can't cope with the world outside. Campbell went away for a couple of months' holiday some years ago. He came back after a week; he said he couldn't stand the racket, and the sight of so many people in the streets scared him."

It was a strange world into which Ashenden found himself thrown when, his health gradually improving, he was able to mix with his fellow patients. One morning Dr. Lennox told him he could thenceforward lunch in the dining-room. This was a large, low room, with great window space; the windows were always wide open and on fine days the sun streamed in. There seemed to be a great many people and it took him some time to sort them out. They were of all kinds, young, middle-aged and old. There were some, like McLeod and Campbell, who had been at the sanatorium for years and expected to die there. Others had only been there for a few months. There was one middle-aged spinster called Miss Atkin who had been coming every winter for a long time and in the summer went to stay with friends and relations. She had nothing much the matter with her any more, and might just as well have stayed away altogether, but she liked the life. Her long residence had given her a sort of position, she was honorary librarian and hand in glove with the matron. She was always ready to gossip with you, but you were soon warned that everything you said was passed on. It was useful to Dr. Lennox to know that his patients were getting on well together and were happy, that they did nothing imprudent and followed his instructions. Little escaped Miss Atkin's sharp eyes, and from her it went to the matron and so to Dr. Lennox. Because she had been coming for so many years, she sat at the same table as McLeod and Campbell, together with an old general who had been put there on account of his rank. The table was in no way different from any other, and it was not more advantageously placed, but because the oldest residents sat there it was looked upon as the most desirable place to sit, and several elderly women were bitterly resentful

because Miss Atkin, who went away for four or five months every summer, should be given a place there while they who spent the whole year in the sanatorium sat at other tables. There was an old Indian civilian who had been at the sanatorium longer than anyone but McLeod and Campbell; he was a man who in his day had ruled a province, and he was waiting irascibly for either McLeod or Campbell to die so that he might take his place at the first table. Ashenden made the acquaintance of Campbell. He was a long, big-boned fellow with a bald head, so thin that you wondered how his limbs held together; and when he sat crumpled in an arm-chair he gave you the uncanny impression of a mannikin in a puppet-show. He was brusque, touchy and bad-tempered. The first thing he asked Ashenden was:

"Are you fond of music?"

"Ycs."

"No one here cares a damn for it. I play the violin. But if you like it, come to my room one day and I'll play to you."

"Don't you go," said McLeod, who heard him. "It's torture."

"How can you be so rude?" cried Miss Atkin. "Mr. Campbell plays very nicely."

"There's no one in this beastly place that knows one note from another," said Campbell.

With a derisive chuckle McLeod walked off. Miss Atkin tried to smooth things down.

"You mustn't mind what Mr. McLeod said."

"Oh, I don't. I'll get back on him all right."

He played the same tune over and over again all that afternoon. McLeod banged on the floor, but Campbell went on. He sent a message by a maid to say that he had a headache and would Mr. Campbell mind not playing; Campbell replied that he had a perfect right to play and if Mr. McLeod didn't like it he could lump it. When next they met high words passed.

Ashenden was put at a table with the pretty Miss Bishop,

with Templeton, and with a London man, an accountant, called Henry Chester. He was a stocky, broad-shouldered, wiry little fellow, and the last person you would ever have thought would be attacked by T.B. It had come upon him as a sudden and unexpected blow. He was a perfectly ordinary man, somewhere between thirty and forty, married, with two children. He lived in a decent suburb. He went up to the city every morning and read the morning paper; he came down from the city every evening and read the evening paper. He had no interests except his business and his family. He liked his work; he made enough money to live in comfort, he put by a reasonable sum every year, he played golf on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday, he went every August for a three weeks' holiday to the same place on the east coast; his children would grow up and marry, then he would turn his business over to his son and retire with his wife to a little house in the country where he could potter about till death claimed him at a ripe old age. He asked nothing more from life than that, and it was a life that thousands upon thousands of his fellow men lived with satisfaction. He was the average citizen. Then this thing happened. He had caught cold playing golf, it had gone to his chest, and he had had a cough that he couldn't shake off. He had always been strong and healthy, and had no opinion of doctors; but at last at his wife's persuasion he had consented to see one. It was a shock to him, a fearful shock, to learn that there was tubercle in both his lungs and that his only chance of life was to go immediately to a sanatorium. The specialist he saw then told him that he might be able to go back to work in a couple of years, but two years had passed and Dr. Lennox advised him not to think of it for at least a year more. He showed him the bacilli in his sputum, and in an X-ray photograph the actively-diseased patches in his lungs. He lost heart. It seemed to him a cruel and unjust trick that fate had played upon him. He could have understood it if he had led a wild life, if he had

drunk too much, played around with women or kept late hours. He would have deserved it then. But he had done none of these things. It was monstrously unfair. Having no resources in himself, no interest in books, he had nothing to do but think of his health. It became an obsession. He watched his symptoms anxiously. They had to deprive him of a thermometer because he took his temperature a dozen times a day. He got it into his head that the doctors were taking his case too indifferently, and in order to force their attention used every method he could devise to make the thermometer register a temperature that would alarm; and when his tricks were foiled he grew sulky and querulous. But he was by nature a jovial, friendly creature, and when he forgot himself he talked and laughed gaily; then on a sudden he remembered that he was a sick man and you would see in his eyes the fear of death.

At the end of every month his wife came up to spend a day or two in a lodging-house nearby. Dr. Lennox did not much like the visits that relatives paid the patients, it excited and unsettled them. It was moving to see the eagerness with which Henry Chester looked forward to his wife's arrival; but it was strange to notice that once she had come he seemed less pleased than one would have expected. Mrs. Chester was a pleasant, cheerful little woman, not pretty, but neat, as commonplace as her husband, and you only had to look at her to know that she was a good wife and mother, a careful housekeeper, a nice, quiet body who did her duty and interfered with nobody. She had been quite happy in the dull, domestic life they had led for so many years, her only dissipation a visit to the pictures, her great thrill the sales in the big London shops; and it had never occurred to her that it was monotonous. It completely satisfied her. Ashenden liked her. He listened with interest while she prattled about her children and her house in the suburbs, her neighbours and her trivial occupations. On one occasion he met her in the road.

Chester for some reason connected with his treatment had stayed in and she was alone. Ashenden suggested that they should walk together. They talked for a little of indifferent things. Then she suddenly asked him how he thought her husband was.

"I think he seems to be getting on all right."

"I'm so terribly worried,"

"You must remember it's a slow, long business. One has to have patience."

They walked on a little and then he saw she was crying.

"You mustn't be unhappy about him," said Ashenden gently.

"Oh, you don't know what I have to put up with when I come here. I know I ought not to speak about it, but I must. I can trust you, can't I?"

"Of course."

"I love him. I'm devoted to him. I'd do anything in the world I could for him. We've never quarrelled, we've never even differed about a single thing. He's beginning to hate me and it breaks my heart."

"Oh, I can't believe that. Why, when you're not here he talks of you all the time. He couldn't talk more nicely. He's devoted to you."

"Yes, that's when I'm not here. It's when I'm here, when he sees me well and strong, that it comes over him. You see, he resents it so terribly that he's ill and I'm well. He's afraid he's going to die and he hates me because I'm going to live. I have to be on my guard all the time; almost everything I say, if I speak of the children, if I speak of the future, exasperates him, and he says bitter, wounding things. When I speak of something I've had to do to the house or a servant I've had to change it irritates him beyond endurance. He complains that I treat him as if he didn't count any more. We used to be so united, and now I feel there's a great wall of antagonism between us. I know I shouldn't blame him, I

know it's only his illness, he's a dear good man really, and kindness itself, normally he's the easiest man in the world to get on with; and now I simply dread coming here and I go with relief. He'd be terribly sorry if I had T.B. but I know that in his heart of hearts it would be a relief. He could forgive me, he could forgive fate, if he thought I was going to die too. Sometimes he tortures me by talking about what I shall do when he's dead, and when I get hysterical and cry out to him to stop, he says I needn't grudge him a little pleasure when he'll be dead so soon and I can go on living for years and years and have a good time. Oh, it's so frightful to think that this love we've had for one another all these years should die in this sordid, miserable way."

Mrs. Chester sat down on a stone by the roadside and gave way to passionate weeping. Ashenden looked at her with pity, but could find nothing to say that might comfort her. What she had told him did not come quite as a surprise.

"Give me a cigarette," she said at last. "I mustn't let my eyes get all red and swollen, or Henry'll know I've been crying and he'll think I've had bad news about him. Is death so horrible? Do we all fear death like that?"

"I don't know," said Ashenden.

"When my mother was dying she didn't seem to mind a bit. She knew it was coming and she even made little jokes about it. But she was an old woman."

Mrs. Chester pulled herself together and they set off again. They walked for a while in silence.

"You won't think any the worse of Henry for what I've told you?" she said at last.

"Of course not."

"He's been a good husband and a good father. I've never known a better man in my life. Until this illness I don't think an unkind or ungenerous thought ever passed through his head."

The conversation left Ashenden pensive. People often said

he had a low opinion of human nature. It was because he did not always judge his fellows by the usual standards. He accepted, with a smile, a tear or a shrug of the shoulders, much that filled others with dismay. It was true that you would never have expected that good-natured, commonplace little chap to harbour such bitter and unworthy thoughts; but who has ever been able to tell to what depths man may fall or to what heights rise? The fault lay in the poverty of his ideals. Henry Chester was born and bred to lead an average life, exposed to the normal vicissitudes of existence, and when an unforeseeable accident befell him he had no means of coping with it. He was like a brick made to take its place with a million others in a huge factory, but by chance with a flaw in it so that it is inadequate to its purpose. And the brick too, if it had a mind, might cry: What have I done that I cannot fulfil my modest end, but must be taken away from all these other bricks that support me and thrown on the dust-heap? It was no fault of Henry Chester's that he was incapable of the conceptions that might have enabled him to bear his calamity with resignation. It is not everyone who can find solace in art or thought. It is the tragedy of our day that these humble souls have lost their faith in God, in whom lay hope, and their belief in a resurrection that might bring them the happiness that has been denied them on earth; and have found nothing to put in their place.

There are people who say that suffering ennobles. It is not true. As a general rule it makes man petty, querulous and selfish; but here in this sanatorium there was not much suffering. In certain stages of tuberculosis the slight fever that accompanies it excites rather than depresses, so that the patient feels alert and, upborne by hope, faces the future blithely; but for all that the idea of death haunts the sub-conscious. It is a sardonic theme song that runs through a sprightly operetta. Now and again the gay, melodious arias, the dance measures, deviate strangely into tragic strains that

throb menacingly down the nerves; the petty interests of every day, the small jealousies and trivial concerns are as nothing; pity and terror make the heart on a sudden stand still and the awfulness of death broods as the silence that precedes a tropical storm broods over the tropical jungle. After Ashenden had been for some time at the sanatorium there came a boy of twenty. He was in the navy, a sub-lieutenant in a submarine, and he had what they used to call in novels galloping consumption. He was a tall, good-looking youth, with curly brown hair, blue eyes and a very sweet smile. Ashenden saw him two or three times lying on the terrace in the sun and passed the time of day with him. He was a cheerful lad. He talked of musical shows and film stars; and he read the paper for the football results and the boxing news. Then he was put to bed and Ashenden saw him no more. His relations were sent for and in two months he was dead. He died uncomplaining. He understood what was happening to him as little as an animal. For a day or two there was the same malaise in the sanatorium as there is in a prison when a man has been hanged; and then, as though by universal consent, in obedience to an instinct of self-preservation, the boy was put out of mind: life, with its three meals a day, its golf on the miniature course, its regulated exercise, its prescribed rests, its quarrels and jealousies, its scandal-mongering and petty vexations, went on as before. Campbell, to the exasperation of McLeod, continued to play the prize-song and "Annie Laurie" on his fiddle. McLeod continued to boast of his bridge and gossip about other people's health and morals. Miss Atkin continued to backbite. Henry Chester continued to complain that the doctors gave him insufficient attention and railed against fate because, after the model life he had led, it had played him such a dirty trick. Ashenden continued to read, and with amused tolerance to watch the vagaries of his fellow-creatures.

He became intimate with Major Templeton. Templeton

was perhaps a little more than forty years of age. He had been in the Grenadier Guards, but had resigned his commission after the war. A man of ample means, he had since then devoted himself entirely to pleasure. He raced in the racing season, shot in the shooting season and hunted in the hunting season. When this was over he went to Monte Carlo. He told Ashenden of the large sums he had made and lost at baccarat. He was very fond of women and if his stories could be believed they were very fond of him. He loved good food and good drink. He knew by their first names the headwaiters of every restaurant in London where you ate well. He belonged to half a dozen clubs. He had led for years a useless, selfish, worthless life, the sort of life which maybe it will be impossible for anyone to live in the future, but he had lived it without misgiving and had enjoyed it. Ashenden asked him once what he would do if he had his time over again and he answered that he would do exactly what he had done. He was an amusing talker, gay and pleasantly ironic, and he dealt with the surface of things, which was all he knew, with a light, easy and assured touch. He always had a pleasant word for the dowdy spinsters in the sanatorium and a joking one for the peppery old gentlemen, for he combined good manners with a natural kindness. He knew his way about the superficial world of the people who have more money than they know what to do with as well as he knew his way about Mayfair. He was the kind of man who would always have been willing to take a bet, to help a friend and to give a tenner to a rogue. If he had never done much good in the world he had never done much harm. He amounted to nothing. But he was a more agreeable companion than many of more sterling character and of more admirable qualities. He was very ill now. He was dying and he knew it. He took it with the same easy, laughing nonchalance as he had taken all the rest. He'd had a thundering good time, he regretted nothing, it was rotten tough luck getting T.B., but to hell

with it, no one can live for ever, and when you came to think of it, he might have been killed in the war or broken his bloody neck in a point to point. His principle all through life had been, when you've made a bad bet, pay up and forget about it. He'd had a good run for his money and he was ready to call it a day. It had been a damned good party while it lasted, but every party's got to come to an end, and next day it doesn't matter much if you went home with the milk or if you left while the fun was in full swing.

Of all those people in the sanatorium he was probably from the moral standpoint the least worthy, but he was the only one who genuinely accepted the inevitable with unconcern. He snapped his fingers in the face of death, and you could choose whether to call his levity unbecoming or his insouciance gallant.

The last thing that ever occurred to him when he came to the sanatorium was that he might fall more deeply in love there than he had ever done before. His amours had been numerous, but they had been light; he had been content with the politely mercenary love of chorus girls and with ephemeral unions with women of easy virtue whom he met at house parties. He had always taken care to avoid any attachment that might endanger his freedom. His only aim in life had been to get as much fun out of it as possible, and where sex was concerned he found every advantage and no inconvenience in ceaseless variety. But he liked women. Even when they were quite old he could not talk to them without a caress in his eyes and a tenderness in his voice. He was prepared to do anything to please them. They were conscious of his interest in them and were agreeably flattered, and they felt, quite mistakenly, that they could trust him never to let them down. He once said a thing that Ashenden thought showed insight.

"You know, any man can get any woman he wants if he tries hard enough, there's nothing in that, but once he's got

her, only a man who thinks the world of women can get rid of her without humiliating her."

It was simply from habit that he began to make love to Ivy Bishop. She was the prettiest and the youngest girl in the sanatorium. She was in point of fact not so young as Ashenden had first thought her, she was twenty-nine, but for the last eight years she had been wandering from one sanatorium to another, in Switzerland, England and Scotland, and the sheltered invalid life had preserved her youthful appearance so that you might easily have taken her for twenty. All she knew of the world she had learnt in these establishments, so that she combined rather curiously extreme innocence with extreme sophistication. She had seen a number of love affairs run their course. A good many men, of various nationalities, had made love to her; she accepted their attentions with self-possession and humour, but she had at her disposal plenty of firmness when they showed an inclination to go too far. She had a force of character unexpected in anyone who looked so flower-like and when it came to a show-down knew how to express her meaning in plain, cool and decisive words. She was quite ready to have a flirtation with George Templeton. It was a game she understood, and though always charming to him, it was with a bantering lightness that showed quite clearly that she had summed him up and had no mind to take the affair more seriously than he did. Like Ashenden, Templeton went to bed every evening at six and dined in his room, so that he saw Ivy only by day. They went for little walks together, but otherwise were seldom alone. At lunch the conversation between the four of them, Ivy, Templeton, Henry Chester and Ashenden, was general, but it was obvious that it was for neither of the two men that Templeton took so much trouble to be entertaining. It seemed to Ashenden that he was ceasing to flirt with Ivy to pass the time, and that his feeling for her was growing deeper and more sincere; but he could not tell whether she was conscious of it nor whether it

meant anything to her. Whenever Templeton hazarded a remark that was more intimate than the occasion warranted she countered it with an ironic one that made them all laugh. But Templeton's laugh was rueful. He was no longer content to have her take him as a play-boy. The more Ashenden knew Ivy Bishop the more he liked her. There was something pathetic in her sick beauty, with that lovely transparent skin, the thin face in which the eyes were so large and so wonderfully blue; and there was something pathetic in her plight, for like so many others in the sanatorium she seemed to be alone in the world. Her mother led a busy social life, her sisters were married; they took but a perfunctory interest in the young woman from whom they had been separated now for eight years. They corresponded, they came to see her occasionally, but there was no longer very much between them. She accepted the situation without bitterness. She was friendly with everyone and prepared always to listen with sympathy to the complaints and the distress of all and sundry. She went out of her way to be nice to Henry Chester and did what she could to cheer him.

"Well, Mr. Chester," she said to him one day at lunch, "it's the end of the month, your wife will be coming to-morrow. That's something to look forward to."

"No, she's not coming this month," he said quietly, looking down at his plate.

"Oh, I am sorry. Why not? The children are all right, aren't they?"

"Dr. Lennox thinks it's better for me that she shouldn't come."

There was a silence. Ivy looked at him with troubled eyes.

"That's tough luck, old man," said Templeton in his hearty way. "Why didn't you tell Lennox to go to hell?"

"He must know best," said Chester.

Ivy gave him another look and began to talk of something else.

Looking back, Ashenden realised that she had at once suspected the truth. For next day he happened to walk with Chester.

"I'm awfully sorry your wife isn't coming," he said. "You'll miss her visit dreadfully."

"Dreadfully."

He gave Ashenden a sidelong glance. Ashenden felt that he had something he wanted to say, but could not bring himself to say it. He gave his shoulders an angry shrug.

"It's my fault if she's not coming. I asked Lennox to write and tell her not to. I couldn't stick it any more. I spend the whole month looking forward to her coming and then when she's here I hate her. You see, I resent so awfully having this filthy disease. She's strong and well and full of beans. It maddens me when I see the pain in her eyes. What does it matter to her really? Who cares if you're ill? They pretend to care, but they're jolly glad it's you and not them. I'm a swine, aren't I?"

Ashenden remembered how Mrs. Chester had sat on a stone by the side of the road and wept.

"Aren't you afraid you'll make her very unhappy, not letting her come?"

"She must put up with that. I've got enough with my own unhappiness without bothering with hers."

Ashenden did not know what to say and they walked on in silence. Suddenly Chester broke out irritably.

"It's all very well for you to be disinterested and unselfish, you're going to live. I'm going to die, and God damn it, I don't want to die. Why should I? It's not fair."

Time passed. In a place like the sanatorium where there was little to occupy the mind it was inevitable that soon everyone should know that George Templeton was in love with Ivy Bishop. But it was not so easy to tell what her feelings were. It was plain that she liked his company, but she did not seek it, and indeed it looked as though she took pains not to

be alone with him. One or two of the middle-aged ladies tried to trap her into some compromising admission, but ingenuous as she was, she was easily a match for them. She ignored their hints and met their straight questions with incredulous laughter. She succeeded in exasperating them.

"She can't be so stupid as not to see that he's mad about her."

"She has no right to play with him like that."

"I believe she's just as much in love with him as he is with her."

"Dr. Lennox ought to tell her mother."

No one was more incensed than McLeod.

"Too ridiculous. After all, nothing can come of it. He's riddled with T.B. and she's not much better."

Campbell on the other hand was sardonic and gross.

"I'm all for their having a good time while they can. I bet there's a bit of hanky-panky going on if one only knew, and I don't blame 'em."

"You cad," said McLeod.

"Oh, come off it. Templeton isn't the sort of chap to play bumble-puppy bridge with a girl like that unless he's getting something out of it, and she knows a thing or two, I bet."

Ashenden, who saw most of them, knew them better than any of the others. Templeton at last had taken him into his confidence. He was rather amused at himself.

"Rum thing at my time of life, falling in love with a decent girl. Last thing I'd ever expected of myself. And it's no good denying it, I'm in it up to the neck; if I were a well man I'd ask her to marry me to-morrow. I never knew a girl could be as nice as that. I've always thought girls, decent girls, I mean, damned bores. But she isn't a bore, she's as clever as she can be. And pretty too. My God, what a skin! And that hair: but it isn't any of that that's bowled me over like a row of ninepins. D'you know what's got me? Damned ridiculous when you come to think of it. An old rip like me. Virtue.

Makes me laugh like a hyena. Last thing I've ever wanted in a woman, but there it is, no getting away from it, she's good, and it makes me feel like a worm. Surprises you, I suppose?"

"Not a bit," said Ashenden. "You're not the first rake who's fallen to innocence. It's merely the sentimentality of middle age."

"Dirty dog," laughed Templeton.

"What does she say to it?"

"Good God, you don't suppose I've told her. I've never said a word to her that I wouldn't have said before anyone else. I may be dead in six months, and besides, what have I got to offer a girl like that?"

Ashenden by now was pretty sure that she was just as much in love with Templeton as he was with her. He had seen the flush that coloured her cheeks when Templeton came into the dining-room and he had noticed the soft glance she gave him now and then when he was not looking at her. There was a peculiar sweetness in her smile when she listened to him telling some of his old experiences. Ashenden had the impression that she basked comfortably in his love as the patients on the terrace, facing the snow, basked in the hot sunshine; but it might very well be that she was content to leave it at that, and it was certainly no business of his to tell Templeton what perhaps she had no wish that he should know.

Then an incident occurred to disturb the monotony of life. Though McLeod and Campbell were always at odds they played bridge together because, till Templeton came, they were the best players in the sanatorium. They bickered incessantly, their post-mortems were endless, but after so many years each knew the other's game perfectly and they took a keen delight in scoring off one another. As a rule Templeton refused to play with them; though a fine player he preferred to play with Ivy Bishop, and McLeod and Campbell were agreed on this, that she ruined the game. She was the kind of player who, having made a mistake that lost the

rubber, would laugh and say: Well, it only made the difference of a trick. But one afternoon, since Ivy was staying in her room with a headache, Templeton consented to play with Campbell and McLeod. Ashenden was the fourth. Though it was the end of March there had been heavy snow for several days, and they played, in a veranda open on three sides to the wintry air, in fur coats and caps, with mittens on their hands. The stakes were too small for a gambler like Templeton to take the game seriously and his bidding was overbold, but he played so much better than the other three that he generally managed to make his contract or at least to come near it. But there was much doubling and redoubling. The cards ran high, so that an inordinate number of small slams were bid; it was a tempestuous game, and McLeod and Campbell lashed one another with their tongues. Half-past five arrived and the last rubber was started, for at six the bell rang to send everyone to rest. It was a hard-fought rubber, with sets on both sides, for McLeod and Campbell were opponents and each was determined that the other should not win. At ten minutes to six it was game all and the last hand was dealt. Templeton was McLeod's partner and Ashenden Campbell's. The bidding started with two clubs from McLeod; Ashenden said nothing; Templeton showed that he had substantial help, and finally McLeod called a grand slam. Campbell doubled and McLeod redoubled. Hearing this, the players at other tables who had broken off gathered round and the hands were played in deadly silence to a little crowd of onlookers. McLeod's face was white with excitement and there were beads of sweat on his brow. His hands trembled. Campbell was very grim. McLeod had to take two finesses and they both came off. He finished with a squeeze and got the last of the thirteen tricks. There was a burst of applause from the onlookers. McLeod, arrogant in victory, sprang to his feet. He shook his clenched fist at Campbell.

"Play that off on your blasted fiddle," he shouted. "Grand

slam doubled and redoubled. I've wanted to get it all my life and now I've got it. By God. By God."

He gasped. He staggered forward and fell across the table. A stream of blood poured from his mouth. The doctor was sent for. Attendants came. He was dead.

He was buried two days later, early in the morning so that the patients should not be disturbed by the sight of a funeral. A relation in black came from Glasgow to attend it. No one had liked him. No one regretted him. At the end of a week so far as one could tell, he was forgotten. The Indian civilian took his place at the principal table and Campbell moved into the room he had so long wanted.

"Now we shall have peace," said Dr. Lennox to Ashenden. "When you think that I've had to put up with the quarrels and complaints of those two men for years and years . . . Believe me, one has to have patience to run a sanatorium. And to think that after all the trouble he's given me he had to end up like that and scare all those people out of their wits."

"It was a bit of a shock, you know," said Ashenden.

"He was a worthless fellow and yet some of the women have been quite upset about it. Poor little Miss Bishop cried her eyes out."

"I suspect that she was the only one who cried for him and not for herself."

But presently it appeared that there was one person who had not forgotten him. Campbell went about like a lost dog. He wouldn't play bridge. He wouldn't talk. There was no doubt about it, he was moping for McLeod. For several days he remained in his room, having his meals brought to him, and then went to Dr. Lennox and said he didn't like it as well as his old one and wanted to be moved back. Dr. Lennox lost his temper, which he rarely did, and told him he had been pestering him to give him that room for years and now he could stay there or get out of the sanatorium. He returned to it and sat gloomily brooding.

"Why don't you play your violin?" the matron asked him at length. "I haven't heard you play for a fortnight."

"I haven't."

"Why not?"

"It's no fun any more. I used to get a kick out of playing because I knew it maddened McLeod. But now nobody cares if I play or not. I shall never play again."

Nor did he for all the rest of the time that Ashenden was at the sanatorium. It was strange, now that McLeod was dead life had lost its savour for him. With no one to quarrel with, no one to infuriate, he had lost his incentive and it was plain that it would not be long before he followed his enemy to the grave.

But on Templeton McLeod's death had another effect, and one which was soon to have unexpected consequences. He talked to Ashenden about it in his cool, detached way.

"Grand, passing out like that in his moment of triumph. I can't make out why everyone got in such a state about it. He'd been here for years, hadn't he?"

"Eighteen, I believe."

"I wonder if it's worth it. I wonder if it's not better to have one's fling and take the consequences."

"I suppose it depends on how much you value life."

"But is this life?"

Ashenden had no answer. In a few months he could count on being well, but you only had to look at Templeton to know that he was not going to recover. The death-look was on his face.

"D'you know what I've done?" asked Templeton. "I've asked Ivy to marry me."

Ashenden was startled.

"What did she say?"

"Bless her little heart, she said it was the most ridiculous idea she'd ever heard in her life and I was crazy to think of such a thing."

"You must admit she was right."

"Quite. But she's going to marry me."

"It's madness."

"I daresay it is; but anyhow, we're going to see Lennox and ask him what he thinks about it."

The winter had broken at last; there was still snow on the hills, but in the valleys it was melted and on the lower slopes the birch trees were in bud all ready to burst into delicate leaf. The enchantment of spring was in the air. The sun was hot. Everyone felt alert and some felt happy. The old stagers who came only for the winter were making their plans to go south. Templeton and Ivy went to see Dr. Lennox together. They told him what they had in mind. He examined them; they were X-rayed and various tests were taken. Dr. Lennox fixed a day when he would tell them the results and in light of this discuss their proposal. Ashenden saw them just before they went to keep the appointment. They were anxious, but did their best to make a joke of it. Dr. Lennox showed them the results of his examinations and explained to them in plain language what their condition was.

"All that's very fine and large," said Templeton then, "but what we want to know is whether we can get married."

"It would be highly imprudent."

"We know that, but does it matter?"

"And criminal if you had a child."

"We weren't thinking of having one," said Ivy.

"Well, then I'll tell you in very few words how the matter stands. Then you must decide for yourselves."

Templeton gave Ivy a little smile and took her hand. The doctor went on.

"I don't think Miss Bishop will ever be strong enough to lead a normal life, but if she continues to live as she has been doing for the last eight years . . ."

"In sanatoriums?"

"Yes. There's no reason why she shouldn't live very

comfortably, if not to a ripe old age, as long as any sensible person wants to live. The disease is quiescent. If she marries, if she attempts to live an ordinary life, the foci of infection may very well light up again, and what the results of that may be no one can foretell. So far as you are concerned, Templeton, I can put it even more shortly. You've seen the X-ray photos yourself. Your lungs are riddled with tubercle. If you marry you'll be dead in six months."

"And if I don't how long can I live?"

The doctor hesitated.

"Don't be afraid. You can tell me the truth."

"Two or three years."

"Thank you, that's all we wanted to know."

They went as they had come, hand in hand; Ivy was crying softly. No one knew what they said to one another; but when they came into luncheon they were radiant. They told Ashenden and Chester that they were going to be married as soon as they could get a licence. Then Ivy turned to Chester.

"I should so much like your wife to come up for my wedding. D'you think she would?"

"You're not going to be married here?"

"Yes. Our respective relations will only disapprove, so we're not going to tell them until it's all over. We shall ask Dr. Lennox to give me away."

She looked mildly at Chester, waiting for him to speak, for he had not answered her. The other two men watched him. His voice shook a little when he spoke.

"It's very kind of you to want her. I'll write and ask her."

When the news spread among the patients, though everyone congratulated them, most of them privately told one another that it was very injudicious; but when they learnt, as sooner or later everything that happened in the sanatorium was learnt, that Dr. Lennox had told Templeton that if he married he would be dead in six months, they were awed to silence. Even the dumbest were moved at the thought of these

two persons who loved one another so much that they were prepared to sacrifice their lives. A spirit of kindness and good will descended on the sanatorium: people who hadn't been speaking spoke to one another again; others forgot for a brief space their own anxieties. Everyone seemed to share in the happiness of the happy pair. And it was not only the spring that filled those sick hearts with new hope, the great love that had taken possession of the man and the girl seemed to spread its effulgence on all that came near them. Ivy was quietly blissful; the excitement became her and she looked younger and prettier. Templeton seemed to walk on air. He laughed and joked as if he hadn't a care in the world. You would have said that he looked forward to long years of uninterrupted felicity. But one day he confided in Ashenden.

"This isn't a bad place, you know," he said. "Ivy's promised me that when I hand in my checks she'll come back here. She knows the people and she won't be so lonely."

"Doctors are often mistaken," said Ashenden. "If you live reasonably I don't see why you shouldn't go on for a long time yet."

"I'm only asking for three months. If I can only have that it'll be worth it."

Mrs. Chester came up two days before the wedding. She had not seen her husband for several months and they were shy with one another. It was easy to guess that when they were alone they felt awkward and constrained. Yet Chester did his best to shake off the depression that was now habitual and at all events at meal-times showed himself the jolly, hearty little fellow that he must have been before he fell ill. On the eve of the wedding day they all dined together, Templeton and Ashenden both sitting up for dinner; they drank champagne and stayed up till ten joking, laughing and enjoying themselves. The wedding took place next morning in the kirk. Ashenden was best man. Everyone in the sanatorium who could stand on his feet attended it. The

newly married couple were setting out by car immediately after lunch. Patients, doctors and nurses assembled to see them off. Someone had tied an old shoe on the back of the car, and as Templeton and his wife came out of the door of the sanatorium rice was flung over them. A cheer was raised as they drove away, as they drove away to love and death. The crowd separated slowly. Chester and his wife went silently side by side. After they had gone a little way he shyly took her hand. Her heart seemed to miss a beat. With a sidelong glance she saw that his eyes were wet with tears.

"Forgive me, dear," he said. "I've been very unkind to you."

"I knew you didn't mean it," she faltered.

"Yes, I did. I wanted you to suffer because I was suffering. But not any more. All this about Templeton and Ivy Bishop—I don't know how to put it, it's made me see everything differently. I don't mind dying any more. I don't think death's very important, not so important as love. And I want you to live and be happy. I don't grudge you anything any more and I don't resent anything. I'm glad now it's me that must die and not you. I wish for you everything that's good in the world. I love you."

★ T R I O ★

SANATORIUM



Adapted for the Screen from the Story by
W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

SANATORIUM

List of Cast

<i>Artiste</i>	<i>Character</i>
ROLAND CULVER	ASHENDEN
MICHAEL RENNIE	MAJOR TEMPLETON
JEAN SIMMONS	EVIE BISHOP
FINLAY CURRIE	MCLEOD
JOHN LAURIE	CAMPBELL
RAYMOND HUNTLEY	MR. CHESTER
BETTY ANN DAVIES	MRS. CHESTER
MARJORIE FIELDING	MRS. WHITBREAD
MARY MERRALL	MISS ATKIN
ANDRE MORELL	DR. LENNOX
JOAN MARION	MATRON
ANDREW CRAWFORD	CAB DRIVER
SHELAGH FRASER	NURSE TO ASHENDEN AND TEMPLETON
JOAN ELAN	ELSIE (Nurse)
DAVID KEIR	VICAR

Following Mr. Maugham's introduction we—

DISSOLVE

MR. MAUGHAM: The *Sanatorium* is a story founded on an experience of my own, and if you like you can take the character of Ashenden as a very flattering self portrait of the old party that stands before you.

1. *Insert.*

The printed copy of the volume of short stories. First the title page and then the opening pages of the story. Behind this we hear the narrator's voice, reading the opening sentences of the story.

NARRATOR: Ashenden had contracted tuberculosis of the lungs . . .

DISSOLVE

2. *Interior Consulting-Room. Day.*

Ashenden is talking to his doctor who has an X-ray photograph in his hand. He is holding this up to the light and pointing out something with a pencil held in the other hand. Ashenden looks at the photograph over the doctor's shoulder. Over this the narrator's voice continues . . .

NARRATOR: . . . and since at the time there were reasons which made it difficult for him to go to Switzerland, the specialist he saw in London . . .

DISSOLVE

3. *Exterior Station. Day.*

A tiny local station in Scotland. A train with only three or four coaches is just leaving the station. Ashenden comes from the station followed by a porter carrying two bags. These are placed in a big, old saloon car. Ashenden gets into the

car, which drives away. Over this the narrator's voice completes the sentence with the words. . . .

NARRATOR: . . . had sent him up to a sanatorium in the north of Scotland.

DISSOLVE

4. *Exterior Road. Day.*

The station car, climbing a hilly Highland road.

5. *Interior Car. Day.*

Ashenden is sitting beside the driver. His luggage is piled on the back seat. The driver glances at Ashenden and says—

DRIVER: Is this the first time you've been here, sir?

ASHENDEN: Yes.

DRIVER: I thought I hadna' seen you before.

ASHENDEN: You say that as though most of them come back again.

DRIVER: Oh, there's quite a few that don't! Scotland's a grand place. Got the best climate in the world, and this is the best climate in Scotland.

ASHENDEN: I sec your heart's in the Highlands all right.

DRIVER: That it is, sir. I was in America once, but I had to come away. Terrible weather they have in that country. I was working in one place where they hadn't had a drop of rain for six months. (*He points ahead.*) That's it, sir. Up there on the hill yonder, behind the firs.

ASHENDEN: It's a big place.

DRIVER: Aye. It's a real house all right.

ASHENDEN: I suppose they're coming and going all the time?

DRIVER: On and off, sir. You're the first I've took up for more'na week, but two went off last Tuesday.

ASHENDEN: Cured?

DRIVER: Aye, sir.

DISSOLVE

6. *Exterior Sanatorium. Day.*

The car drives up to the porch of the sanatorium and Ashenden gets out. Almost immediately a pleasant, middle-aged woman appears from within to welcome him.

MATRON: Good morning!

ASHENDEN: Good morning!

MATRON: You're Mr. Ashenden, I expect.

ASHENDEN: Yes.

She goes inside and Ashenden follows her.

7. *Interior Hall, Sanatorium. Day.*

As Ashenden follows the matron in, the porter comes out to collect his luggage. There is a cheerful efficiency about all the staff that makes the place more like a prosperous hotel.

MATRON (continuing): I'm Miss Harding, the matron.

Dr. Lennox is waiting for you.

They pass into the lounge.

8. *Interior Lounge, Sanatorium. Day.*

Ashenden comes across the lounge with the matron towards a wide staircase. Patients are seen in the background and the camera picks out two elderly ladies seated in an alcove near the door. They are in a good position to see everything that is going on, and Ashenden, as a newcomer, is naturally of great interest. The names of the two ladies are Miss Atkin and Mrs. Whitbread. Miss Atkin knits, Mrs. Whitbread crochets.

MISS ATKIN (watching Ashenden): He's quite handsome, isn't he?

MRS. WHITBREAD: I'm sure he can't be forty!

MISS ATKIN: He was forty on the ninth of September.

I didn't get time to read all his papers, but I'm certain of that.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Dr. Lennox shouldn't leave his patients' papers about. I don't think it's nice.

MISS ATKIN: He doesn't as a rule. It just happened that he was called away from his room for a minute when I dropped in to see him this morning, and there were Mr. Ashenden's papers spread out on his desk, with X-ray photos and everything.

MRS. WHITBREAD: What was your impression of his lungs?

MISS ATKIN: I think it's only his left one, but I didn't have my proper glasses.

DISSOLVE

9. *Interior Dr. Lennox's Surgery. Day.*

Dr. Lennox is small, brisk and genial. He is at his desk, looking over some notes and X-ray photographs, while Ashenden watches him.

LENNOX (*laying down the X-rays*): Excellent. Some of the best I've seen.

ASHENDEN: My lungs?

LENNOX: No, no—this second batch of X-rays. I must ask Mayharte who did 'em. First rate.

ASHENDEN: Dr. Lennox, I don't know what your methods are here, but there are one or two things I'd like to ask.

LENNOX: Fire away.

ASHENDEN: What are my chances? And don't be gentle with me.

LENNOX: I won't. There's no need to be. You're taking it in good time.

ASHENDEN: You mean you can really do something about it?

LENNOX: We can't guarantee anything, of course.

It depends so much on yourself. But if you co-operate and do as we tell you, there's no reason why you shouldn't be completely cured.

ASHENDEN: How long will it take?

LENNOX: Impossible to say—might be six months—might be a year. Every case is different.

10. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

Miss Atkin and Mrs. Whitbread are still gossiping.

MRS. WHITBREAD: If you'd asked me, I'd have said he was as sound as a bell. He doesn't look like an ordinary consumptive.

MISS ATKIN: Oh, he's not. It isn't hereditary. His grandfather died of heart at eighty-three, and his father had a rhomboid.

MRS. WHITBREAD (*looking at her over her glasses*): A rhomboid?

MISS ATKIN: Yes.

MRS. WHITBREAD: But a rhomboid is a thing they use for drawing lessons.

MISS ATKIN: Well, that's what his father died of—unless it was my wrong glasses.

11. *Interior First Floor Passage. Day.*

Dr. Lennox and Ashenden come out of the surgery and go along the passage leading to the patients' rooms.

LENNOX: I'll show you your room. You'd better go to bed right away.

ASHENDEN: I haven't had a day in bed since I had measles when I was nine.

LENNOX: Well, now you're going to make up for it by having six weeks.

ASHENDEN (*horrified*): Six weeks!

LENNOX: Not a day less.

12. *Interior Ashenden's Room. Day.*

It is next morning and Ashenden, propped up with pillows, is in bed having his temperature taken by a young and presentable Scots nurse. She pulls the thermometer from his mouth, reads it and then enters his temperature on a chart which hangs on the end of the bed.

ASHENDEN: What am I supposed to do all day?

NURSE: Eat, sleep and read.

ASHENDEN: Is that all?

NURSE: Isn't it enough?

ASHENDEN: I shall need some more books.

NURSE: Och, we've a grand wee library here. I'll get you a few to be going on with.

ASHENDEN: That's very good of you.

NURSE: Not a bit. I once read a story of yours that changed my whole life.

Before Ashenden can reply to this, there is a diversion in the sound of a violin from the next room. The unseen player is giving a fair rendering of a Scottish melody.

ASHENDEN: Who's that playing?

NURSE: Mr. Campbell. He's your next-door neighbour.

ASHENDEN: So I hear.

NURSE: Don't you like music?

ASHENDEN: In moderation.

NURSE: They do say, Mr. Campbell only plays to annoy Mr. McLeod—*(she points upwards)*—up above in No. 26.

There is a furious knocking on the ceiling above.

ASHENDEN: Apparently he succeeds.

NURSE: Och, they're a pair, those twos! But you'll get used to 'em. We all have. Cheerie-bye!

She vanishes with a bright smile, shutting the door. Ashenden

picks up a book and opens it. The violin playing continues. He tries to read.

DISSOLVE

13. *Montage.*

Here we have a short and humorous visual montage to cover Ashenden's six weeks in bed, with Campbell's violin playing as counterpoint.

DISSOLVE

14. *Interior Ashenden's Room. Day.*

Dr. Lennox is standing by the window, while Ashenden knots his tie at the mirror of his dressing-table.

LENNOX: . . . Just because you're up for the first time, don't think you can do everything at once! Take it easy for a day or two, and don't exert yourself.

ASHENDEN: Not even for a walk?

LENNOX: Not even for a walk. I'll tell you when you can attempt that. You can go as far as the veranda, that's all. Come along now and meet your fellow prisoners.

Ashenden follows him into the passage.

15. *Interior First Floor Passage. Day.*

Still talking, Ashenden and Lennox walk down the passage.

LENNOX: You'll find them much the same as anyone else except for a bit more light and darkness in them, if you know what I mean.

ASHENDEN: In what way?

LENNOX: Well, the illness seems to bring out the best or worst in people. Sharpens the edges of their strength and weakness.

They reach the head of the staircase, and Lennox pauses, looking down into the lounge below.

LENNOX: Take those two playing chess, for instance.

ASHENDEN: Yes?

16. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

Ashenden's eye-line on to McLeod and Campbell, two elderly men, who are playing chess in a corner of the lounge. Lennox's voice continues over the scene.

LENNOX'S VOICE: . . . They're our oldest inhabitants. The one on the right's McLeod: he's been here seventeen years. The other one's Campbell—and he's been here over sixteen. They hate each other like poison. . . .

17. *Interior Main Staircase. Day.*

Dr. Lennox leads Ashenden down the staircase, across the lounge and over towards the two men.

LENNOX: . . . Fight like dog and cat. But they're never out of each other's sight. I don't think they could live without one another.

The lounge was at one time, no doubt, the Great Hall of the mansion. It has a feudal splendour about it, good furniture, stag heads on the walls, suits of armour at the foot of the stairs. Some of the patients are seen reading, writing, playing cards or talking in small groups. Lennox and Ashenden reach the chess players.

LENNOX (*as they look up*): Before you make the next move, I'd like you to meet Mr. Ashenden. He's down for the first time to-day. Mr. McLeod—Mr. Campbell.

MCLEOD (*rising*): How d'you do? Always glad to see a new face—(*indicating Campbell.*) I've been looking at that one for sixteen years.

Lennox winks at Ashenden and moves off.

ASHENDEN: Don't let me disturb your game.

MCLEOD: That's all right. I've got him beaten, anyway. In a couple of moves I'll——

CAMPBELL (*simply moving forward and making a move*):
Check!

MCLEOD (*temper rising*): What're you talking about?

CAMPBELL: I said "Check".

MCLEOD (*frowning at the board*): Where did that bishop come from?

CAMPBELL (*indicating square*): Here.

MCLEOD: It wasn't there ten seconds ago—before I looked away.

CAMPBELL: Are you accusing me of cheating?

MCLEOD: Yes.

Campbell rises and walks off in silent dignity. McLeod laughs. Ashenden sits next to him, drawing up an arm-chair.

MCLEOD: He's always like that when he loses. Do you play?

ASHENDEN: Not much.

18. *Interior Veranda. Day.*

The veranda opens out of the lounge. A number of patients are sitting there, occupied in various ways, among them, Miss Atkin and Mrs. Whitbread, with their heads close together as usual. At the far end of the veranda sits a young girl with pale, beautiful features and shining red-gold hair. She is busy writing and is very well wrapped up.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Mr. Ashenden's down, I see.

MISS ATKIN: Yes, that's one worry off my shoulders at last! The books he got through.

MRS. WHITBREAD: You've been librarian too long. You should let someone else have the job for a change.

MISS ATKIN: Oh, no! I enjoy it too much—in the normal way—but his appetite was simply phenomenal. I believe he's writing to London now for some most peculiar books.

MRS. WHITBREAD: How do you know?

MISS ATKIN: Matron told me. Oh! And I nearly forgot—we've a new man coming this morning. A Major Templeton.

MRS. WHITBREAD (*startled*): Templeton! Not George Templeton?

MISS ATKIN: Why? D'you know him?

MRS. WHITBREAD: I wonder if it's the same one?

MISS ATKIN: I don't know if his name's George, but he was in the Guards.

MRS. WHITBREAD: It must be George.

MISS ATKIN: Is he a relation of yours?

MRS. WHITBREAD: Good gracious, no! Nobody in our family would behave like George Templeton. He got a niece of mine into the most awful trouble.

MISS ATKIN: No!

MRS. WHITBREAD: Yes! I'll tell you about it one day, but first I must find Dr. Lennox and see whether it's really him or not. I shall make a point of cutting him dead.

She has hurriedly risen and now makes her way into the lounge.

19. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

McLeod and Ashenden are still talking in the lounge.

MCLEOD: Where's your room?

ASHENDEN: First floor. Number fifteen.

MCLEOD: Small. I know every room in the place. Mine's number twenty-six. Makes Campbell angry.

ASHENDEN: Why?

MCLEOD: It's the best one in the place. He wants it

for himself. Keeps badgering the doctor for it. But I'm not going to budge. Not for a fellow like that. Besides, I came here six months before he did.

ASHENDEN: Seventeen years is a long while.

MCLEOD: Oh, time passes quickly. And I like it here. Care for me to show you around?

ASHENDEN: Thanks.

MCLEOD (*rising and walking towards veranda*): If I went back to ordinary life now, I'd hate it.

As Ashenden accompanies McLeod, they pass Mrs. Whitbread coming in.

MCLEOD: All my old pals would have gone their own ways. I wouldn't have anything in common with them any more. After this place the world's just a silly, noisy rush.

They exeunt on to the veranda.

20. *Interior Veranda. Day.*

Ashenden and McLeod pause as they come out on to the veranda.

ASHENDEN: What do you do with yourself all day?

MCLEOD: Do? Having T.B. is a whole time job, my boy. There's my temperature to take and then I weigh myself. I don't hurry over my dressing. I have breakfast. I read the papers and go for a walk. Then I have my rest. I lunch and play bridge. I have another rest and then I dine. I play a bit more bridge then I go to bed.

ASHENDEN: Doesn't it get monotonous?

MCLEOD: Oh no. They've got quite a decent library here—we get all the new books—but I don't really have much time for reading. I like to talk to people. You meet all sorts here. They come and they go. Sometimes they go because they

think they're cured, but a lot of them come back again. Sometimes they go because they die. I've seen a lot of people out and I expect to see a lot more.

Miss Bishop looks at him with a smile.

MISS BISHOP: Mr. McLeod is all for looking on the bright side of things.

MCLEOD: With a smile on my lips and a tear in my eyes—Burns.

ASHENDEN: Scott.

MCLEOD: Well, it was one of them anyway.

Miss Bishop giggles.

MCLEOD: Miss Bishop. Mr. Ashenden.

ASHENDEN: How d'you do?

MCLEOD: She's English, but she can't help that.

ASHENDEN: How long have you been here?

MISS BISHOP: Only two years. Dr. Lennox says I'll be all right in a few months. Then I can go home.

MCLEOD: Don't be silly. Stay where you're well off. That's what I say.

He looks off screen and we

CUT TO

21. *Exterior Sanatorium. Day.*

The old hired car comes trundling up the drive and stops as usual, in front of the porch. A tall, soldierly-looking man gets out and is greeted by the matron. As they go inside, Ashenden and McLeod can be seen turning the corner of the house.

22. *Interior First Floor Passage. Day.*

Mrs. Whitbread is just turning away disconsolately from the door of the surgery, when she sees Dr. Lennox coming from the stair-head towards her. She approaches him eagerly.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Oh, Dr. Lennox, I've been looking everywhere for you.

LENNOX: Something wrong?

MRS. WHITBREAD: I'm not sure till I've asked you something. (*A nurse is coming along the corridor.*)
Something private.

LENNOX: You'd better come inside.

Dr. Lennox goes into the surgery and Mrs. Whitbread follows him, talking quickly.

23. *Interior Dr. Lennox's Surgery. Day.*

Lennox crosses to his desk and prepares to suffer Mrs. Whitbread.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Please don't think me inquisitive, Doctor.

LENNOX: Won't you sit down?

MRS. WHITBREAD: No, no thank you. But I simply must know if the Major Templeton expected this morning is *George* Templeton.

LENNOX: I think so. Why?

MRS. WHITBREAD: He's a most disreputable man. A rake and a libertine. He was co-respondent in my poor niece's divorce case, and he wouldn't marry her. They wouldn't have been happy, of course, but they would have been respectable. I really don't think you ought to have let him come here.

LENNOX: Mrs. Whitbread, Major Templeton's morals are no concern of mine—nor anyone else's in the sanatorium. So long as he's under this roof he's simply my patient and I shall do my utmost to bring him back to health.

There is a sharp knock at the door.

LENNOX: Come in!

Matron enters, ushering in the tall man we saw in the drive.

MATRON: Major Templeton, doctor!

Templeton is good-looking in a slightly theatrical way, having

fine dark eyes and a small black moustache. Mrs. Whitbread flings back her head, stares icily at Templeton, and sweeps out of the room.

TEMPLETON: Who is that old trout? I seem to know her face.

LENNOX: She's one of our patients. Won't you sit down?

DISSOLVE

24. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

A gong is being rung by a maid for lunch. A number of patients are already crossing the lounge in the direction of the dining-room.

25. *Interior Dining-Room. Day.*

This is a big, tastefully furnished room. Among the guests, Ashenden comes in with McLeod.

MCLEOD: I like to get here before the rush.

ASHENDEN: Where does one sit? Do we have regular places?

MCLEOD: Oh, yes, but you can't expect the best table at present, of course. It's a matter of time.

ASHENDEN: You must have a pretty good place by now.

MCLEOD (*nodding*): With Campbell.

ASHENDEN (*astonished*): With Campbell!

MCLEOD: It's easier that way. He's got a filthy temper. I'm the only one who can deal with him.
The matron bustles up to them and McLeod leaves and goes to his table.

MATRON: Mr. Ashenden. I've put you over here with Miss Bishop.

ASHENDEN (*following her*): Thank you.

MCLEOD: You'll be all right now.

MATRON (*introducing him*): This is Mr. Ashenden.

MISS BISHOP: We've met.

MATRON: Mr. and Mrs. Chester.

Ashenden notices that Chester is a stocky, broad shouldered little man with whom one would scarcely associate T.B. His wife is an ordinary, suburban, domesticated woman—pleasant and cheerful.

ASHENDEN (*sitting between the two women*): How d'you do?

MISS BISHOP: Did you have a good walk?

ASHENDEN: Hardly a walk. I'm not allowed anything as daring as that for a day or two. But it looked lovely country.

MRS. CHESTER: It is beautiful, isn't it? Henry and I got right down to the river this morning, didn't we, dear?

MR. CHESTER (*abruptly*): Yes.

Ashenden glances from Mrs. Chester to her husband. His rather curt answer has hurt her. She is obviously trying to be cheerful. He is morose and depressed.

MISS BISHOP: Mrs. Chester's not a patient. She's our guest to-day.

ASHENDEN: You're staying here?

MRS. CHESTER: No—in the village. I come up once a month from London for the week-end.

ASHENDEN: That's a long trip.

MRS. CHESTER: Yes, but it's worth it to see Henry. Every time I come he seems so much better. Don't you think so, Miss Bishop?

Evie Bishop does not answer. Her glance has wandered to where Major Templeton is being shepherded to an adjoining table by the matron. As he sits down, she suddenly comes back to earth.

MISS BISHOP: What? Oh yes—heaps better.

DISSOLVE

26. *Interior First Floor Passage. Day.*

Templeton comes up the stairs and is walking along the passage towards his room, when he is attacked by a fit of coughing. One of the doors is half open and now Campbell appears in the doorway. He has a violin in his hand.

CAMPBELL: Hullo. You're Templeton, aren't you?

TEMPLETON: That's right.

CAMPBELL: D'you like music?

TEMPLETON (*looking suspiciously at Campbell's violin*):

Yes, very much.

CAMPBELL: Not many here who do. Would you care to hear me play a little? I don't pretend to be a great artist, but I'm not bad really.

TEMPLETON: Well—I promised Lennox I'd be ready for him at three.

CAMPBELL (*urging him in*): That's all right. They'll find you. Come on.

27. *Interior Campbell's Room. Day.*

Templeton enters with Campbell, who indicates an arm-chair.

CAMPBELL: Sit down, will you? Aye—in that chair.

TEMPLETON: Thanks. (*He coughs again but Campbell ignores it.*)

CAMPBELL: I'll play a small piece of my own composition—but go directly it bores you, please.

He begins to play. He does not play badly and his composition is light and attractive—but there is soon an angry knocking on the ceiling from the room above. Templeton looks up in concern, but Campbell carries on.

28. *Interior McLeod's Room. Day.*

McLeod is in his arm-chair, trying to read. The music comes faintly to him and makes him furious. He reaches for a stick and bangs it on the floor. The music goes on. With an angry exclamation he throws away his book, gets up and goes out.

29. *Interior Campbell's Room. Day.*

Campbell plays on to Templeton. Then there is a loud knock at the door.

CAMPBELL (*still playing*): Take no notice!
He carries on. The door bursts open and McLeod comes in, livid.

MCLEOD: Are you going to stop that row or aren't you? (*Campbell goes on playing and McLeod continues.*)
I'll tell the Doctor if you don't.

CAMPBELL: You know perfectly well I'm allowed to play if it isn't in silence hours.

MCLEOD: If you could play—yes. But not that infernal squeaking! (*He wheels on Templeton.*) And you sit there encouraging him!—egging him on!

TEMPLETON: Oh come, I think he plays rather well.

MCLEOD: Oh—you do—do you? I wonder if you'd say that if you'd listened to the same damn tune for fifteen years!—year in—year out!

CAMPBELL: You don't know one tune from another. You never did. If you don't like it you can lump it—or change your room.

MCLEOD (*more furious than ever*): You see?—that's why he does it! He's trying to drive me out of my room because it's the best in the place and he wants it for himself!

Matron, passing the open door and hearing voices, looks in.

MATRON: Ah, there you are, Major Templeton! I wondered where you'd got to. Dr. Lennox is waiting for you.

TEMPLETON (*rising*): Coming, Matron.
As he goes out, McLeod follows with a vindictive look at Campbell. He slams the door.

DISSOLVE

30. *Exterior Grounds. Sanatorium. Day.*

The Chesters are returning from a walk in the grounds. He is panting a little.

CHESTER: Not so fast, Helen. I'm not as strong as you are.

HELEN: Would you like to rest a bit? We've got all day.

CHESTER: You've got all your life.

HELEN: For the present, dear, we've only the week-end. Don't let's spoil it by quarrelling again.

CHESTER: I don't know why you wasted the money. We can't really afford it.

HELEN: I'm glad you mentioned money. That's what I really wanted to talk to you about.

CHESTER: I thought there was a catch in it.

HELEN (*pleading*): Henry—please!

CHESTER: Sorry. What is it?

Chester sits down on a rustic seat and Helen sits beside him.

HELEN: D'you remember the Austins? They went to India three years ago.

CHESTER (*curtly*): Yes—why?

HELEN: Well, they're back again. And they can't find a place to live. There's just the two of them and I thought it might be a good idea if we let them half the house. They'd pay a decent rent and then we wouldn't have to let Tom help us. I know how that worries you. What do you think?

CHESTER: Why ask me?

HELEN: I thought we ought to talk it over. After all, our home's always meant so much to us.

CHESTER: Our home's nothing to do with me any more.

HELEN: Oh, it is! It's just as much yours now as ever it was. All your things are there, just as you left them.

CHESTER: Well, throw 'em away. Give 'em away!
I'll never use 'em again.

HELEN: Don't, Henry!

CHESTER: You're right to think of your future and plan for it—but leave me out.

HELEN: You seem to enjoy hurting me.

CHESTER: You shouldn't begrudge me that little pleasure, my dear. I shall be dead soon and you can go on living for years and years. *And have a good time.*

HELEN: That's not fair, Henry. Everything humanly possible is being done for you here.

CHESTER: Then why don't they take more notice of me? Why don't they bother when my temperature goes up? Because they've given me up. They know it's a waste of time. They know I'm for it.

HELEN: There's no need to torture yourself like this.
Chester gets up irritably and starts to walk away towards the house. She is forced to follow.

CHESTER: Why should this happen to me? Why? It's cruel and unjust. I could understand it, if I'd led a wild life. Played around with women. Kept late hours. I should have deserved it then. But I haven't done any of those things. It's monstrously unfair.

HELEN: Lots of people at the sanatorium are worse than you are, Henry. Much worse! It's unlike you to be so full of self-pity.

CHESTER: You're like all the rest! Go on! Jolly him up! Pretend it isn't as bad as it is. Well, I know what the truth is. They can't fool me.

There is a moment's pause and then Helen says, tentatively—

HELEN: Look, Henry, shall I let the Austins have the house, or not?

CHESTER: I don't care what you let them have

but leave me in peace! I only want to be left alone.
He flings away from her, leaving her standing rather uncertainly, staring after him.

31. *Interior Veranda. Day.*

Ashenden and Templeton, reclining on long seats on the veranda, cannot help noticing the little drama being enacted outside by the Chesters.

ASHENDEN: Strange how the Chesters quarrel. He looks forward to her visits so eagerly it's almost pathetic—and now that she's here——

TEMPLETON: Anti-climax, probably. Cigarette?
He holds out a cigarette case to Ashenden.

ASHENDEN: No, thanks—strictly forbidden. Doctor's orders.

TEMPLETON (*taking one*): Same here, Lennox says if I don't give 'em up, he'll give *me* up. Well. No one can live for ever and I've had a thundering good time. In the army?

ASHENDEN: No. You are, aren't you?

TEMPLETON: I was. Retired three years ago. Cramped my style. I've had a lot of fun since then.

ASHENDEN: What sort of fun?

TEMPLETON: Oh, you know. Racin', huntin', and shootin'. South of France in summer. Great place for the girls.

ASHENDEN: So I've always heard.

TEMPLETON: I like a pretty. One of my weaknesses. You married?

ASHENDEN: No.

TEMPLETON: I'm not either and I don't intend to be. I like my freedom.

At this moment Evie Bishop turns a corner of the house and comes on to the veranda. She has been walking and the exercise has brought a glow of health to her pale skin. When she

has gone into the lounge, Templeton turns to Ashenden.

TEMPLETON: Who's that?

ASHENDEN: A Miss Bishop.

TEMPLETON: Easy on the eye.

ASHENDEN: I wouldn't try anything there, if I were you.

TEMPLETON: Why?

ASHENDEN: She knows her way around. Not unsophisticated as she looks.

TEMPLETON: How did you find that out?

ASHENDEN: Had a talk with her after lunch. She's been in one sanatorium or another for the last eight years, poor kid.

TEMPLETON: I wonder if she'd like to have someone to hold her hand and be a brother to her.

ASHENDEN: I wonder.

DISSOLVE

32. *Interior Library. Night.*

Evie Bishop is at one of the bookshelves in the comfortable library, when Templeton comes in. He casually scans the shelves, but doesn't seem to be able to make up his mind. Evie takes no notice, being absorbed in a book she has just taken down from a shelf. He strolls past her and begins to investigate another section of the bookcase, at the same time, taking a quick glance in her direction. She does not blink an eyelid.

33. *Interior Writing-Room. Night.*

There are several people in the writing-room, which looks on to the front drive, among them Ashenden, an old Colonel and Miss Atkin. All these are at different tables, engaged with their correspondence. The door opens and Ashenden's nurse pops her head in.

NURSE: Mr. Ashenden!

Ashenden looks up from his writing.

ASHENDEN: Yes, Nurse?

NURSE: Seven o'clock—bedtime.

ASHENDEN: So early?

NURSE: So late, you mean! You should've been in bed by seven, not just going.

Ashenden obediently collects his things.

NURSE: By the way, has anyone seen Major Templeton about?

MISS ATKIN: He went into the library about half an hour ago. I haven't seen him since.

NURSE: Thanks.

Ashenden follows her out, saying "good night" to the others as he goes.

34. *Interior Library. Night.*

Evie Bishop is standing by the shelves, talking to Templeton, who has several books in his hands. The scene to be played gaily and lightly.

TEMPLETON: What would you advise me to read?

EVIE: I don't know what your tastes are. What about Jane Austen?

TEMPLETON: Never heard of her.

EVIE: Hasn't your education been rather neglected?

TEMPLETON: Dreadfully. What about undertaking it?

EVIE: Me? I can think of much better ways of occupying myself.

TEMPLETON: Such as?

EVIE: Minding my own business, for instance. There's a Sherlock Holmes. Why don't you take that?

TEMPLETON: Putting an end to the conversation?

EVIE: That could be the idea.

TEMPLETON: But I've got a lot more I want to say.

EVIE: The question is if I really want to hear it.

TEMPLETON: You're not trying to snub me, are you?

Because you know you won't succeed.

EVIE: I shan't give it up as a bad job just yet.

From the doorway comes the voice of a nurse, who has come in during this last speech.

NURSE: Major Templeton! (*He swings round, startled.*)
Seven o'clock!

TEMPLETON: What of it?

NURSE: Your bedtime.

TEMPLETON: Bedtime! But I'm in the middle of a most intriguing conversation with Miss Bishop.

NURSE: Maybe—but we can't have you burning the candle at both ends. Come along now.

TEMPLETON: Oh! All right. (*To Evie.*) I'm to be allowed out for my first stroll in the morning. Will you come with me?

EVIE: Oh. I——

TEMPLETON: I'm not very strong yet.

EVIE: Well, if you put it like that I don't quite see how I can refuse.

TEMPLETON: There's a kind lady.

As Templeton leaves her,

DISSOLVE

35. *Interior Main Porch. Day.*

Ashenden is collecting some letters from the rack in the main entrance, when Mrs. Chester comes through on her way to the drive. She is in her hat and coat and is pulling on her gloves.

ASHENDEN: Hello, going back to the village?

MRS. CHESTER: Just to get my bag. Then I have to catch my train.

ASHENDEN: May I come with you as far as the gates?
I'm not allowed any further yet awhile.

MRS. CHESTER: Please do.

They walk out into the drive.

36. *Exterior Sanatorium Drive. Day.*

Ashenden and Mrs. Chester go off down the drive.

ASHENDEN: How long have you been coming up here like this?

MRS. CHESTER: Two years. It's over two years now. Henry got wet one evening, trying to finish some digging before the winter. We'd just bought an extra bit of land to make a little currant garden. He caught a cold and then it turned to this——

Her eyes suddenly filled with tears.

ASHENDEN (*trying to cheer her up*): Anyway, he seems to be getting on all right now.

MRS. CHESTER: Oh, do you really think so? I'm so terribly worried.

ASHENDEN: You mustn't be too unhappy about him. It's a long, slow business.

MRS. CHESTER: I know I shouldn't speak about it, but I can't help it. I love Henry. I'd do anything in the world for him. I want to help him get well, but he says such hard, cruel things. He nearly breaks my heart.

ASHENDEN: I think you are very patient with him. It must be hard. I'm sure it's only because he's ill.

MRS. CHESTER: We used to be so happy. We had things to talk about all day long, but now—we're only together this one week-end a month and everything I say makes him angry and impatient.

ASHENDEN: When he's well again——

MRS. CHESTER: How can he get well when he's so terribly unhappy? You see, his home was everything. He's nothing here. He doesn't read—or play cards, and the people here aren't really his kind. He just broods over his illness. (*Pause.*)

You won't think any the worse of him for what I've told you?

ASHENDEN: Of course not.

MRS. CHESTER: He's such a good man really. Until this illness I don't think an unkind or ungenerous thought ever entered his head.

They have reached the gates by now and Ashenden turns to say good-bye.

ASHENDEN: I'm sure things will come all right. *(He pauses.)* Well, this is as far as I go. When do we see you again?

MRS. CHESTER: I'll be up just before Christmas—Friday the twenty-third.

ASHENDEN: I shall look forward to seeing you.

MRS. CHESTER: If you could have a chat with Henry occasionally, I'd feel so much happier.

ASHENDEN: Of course I will. Don't worry.

MRS. CHESTER: Thank you. Good-bye till Christmas, then.

ASHENDEN *(smiling)*: Till Christmas.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

37. *Exterior Sanatorium. Day.*

The winter has come and the snow with it. The sanatorium has lost a little of its greyness under the dazzling white which now covers the whole countryside.

DISSOLVE

38. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

Near the main entrance, Miss Atkin and Mrs. Whitbread are decorating a huge Christmas tree.

MRS. WHITBREAD: I'm sorry Mrs. Hammond won't be here to see this. She was always so keen on a tree.

MISS ATKIN: Still—it's good to know she'll enjoy it in her own home this time.

Ashenden passes them| on his way to the porch. He has his hat and coat on.

MISS ATKIN: Oh, hallo, Mr. Ashenden.

ASHENDEN: Hallo.

MISS ATKIN: I hear you had quite a long time with the doctor to-day. Nothing bad, I hope?

ASHENDEN (*pausing*): Oh no. My monthly check-up, that's all.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Satisfactory?

ASHENDEN: Quite. If all goes well I shall be out of here by the spring.

MISS ATKIN: We shall be sorry to lose you, Mr. Ashenden. We were only saying just now—the sanatorium isn't nearly what it used to be. It's gone down most dreadfully.

ASHENDEN: Really? In what way?

MISS ATKIN: Well, there was a time when Dr. Lennox would ask people to leave directly he saw certain things beginning to happen. Why he should turn the blind eye on this present case goodness knows.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Nobody minds a little innocent flirtation when it is innocent——

MISS ATKIN: When they're nice young people who're going to get well.

ASHENDEN: If you mean Miss Bishop and Major Templeton I don't think there's anything to worry about.

MRS. WHITBREAD (*sharply*): I happen to know a little more about Major Templeton than most people do.

MISS ATKIN: Did you know he was practically thrown out of the army for carrying on with the colonel's wife?

ASHENDEN: Really?

MRS. WHITBREAD: He took my poor niece to Goodwood and lost a hundred pounds on one race—then borrowed half a crown off her to tip the taxi-driver.

MISS ATKIN: He's a terrible man. He's not fit to be in a sanatorium at all.

MRS. WHITBREAD: And to think of him carrying on with that poor innocent Miss Bishop. It's horrible.

39. *Interior Writing-Room. Day.*

Templeton is lying on his back on the sofa, hands clasped behind his head, talking to Evie Bishop.

TEMPLETON: You know, the more I look at you the more I like you. You're a very pretty girl.

EVIE: Thank you.

TEMPLETON: I suppose a lot of fellows have told you that?

EVIE: A certain number, but it hasn't got them any further.

TEMPLETON: That's not very encouraging.

EVIE: It wasn't meant to be. I've been in and out of sanatoriums for the past eight years and I've developed quite a technique for dealing with predatory males.

TEMPLETON: Oh, and d'you think I'm a predatory male?

EVIE: You have all the ear-marks.

TEMPLETON: You're frank if nothing else.

EVIE: The chances are that we shall be here for a good long time, and I think it's just as well we should come to an understanding right away. Flirting bores me.

TEMPLETON: All right. But there's no reason why we shouldn't become good friends, is there?

EVIE: None.

TEMPLETON: You don't dislike me?

EVIE: Not positively.

TEMPLETON: I improve on acquaintance, you know.

EVIE: That of course remains to be seen.

TEMPLETON: You don't mind my saying that I like you very much?

EVIE: I can't imagine why.

TEMPLETON: I've never met anyone quite like you.

EVIE: Would you think it inquisitive if I asked you how many women you've said that to?

TEMPLETON: Dozens.

She bursts out laughing.

EVIE: That's better. You know I think we're going to get on very well together.

TEMPLETON: Do you know that's the first kind word you've said to me.

EVIE: I think you're bad, thoroughly bad.

TEMPLETON: A lot of women rather like that in men.

EVIE: It's rather attractive. I wouldn't deny that for a moment.

TEMPLETON: I suppose you wouldn't let me kiss you?

EVIE: I can't imagine anything I'd like less.

TEMPLETON: All right, let's drop the subject and talk about something else.

EVIE: Yes. Let's.

DISSOLVE

40. *Exterior Railway Station. Day.*

Outside the small branch-line station Ashenden is waiting. A guard's whistle is heard. A train moves off and a few passengers come by the ticket collector. Among them is Mrs. Chester. She is carrying a small dressing-case in one hand and a wicker-basket in the other. She looks around the station yard, sees Ashenden and gives him a surprised smile.

ASHENDEN: Hello. Happy Xmas.

MRS. CHESTER: Why, it's Mr. Ashenden. Are you meeting somebody?

ASHENDEN: I'm meeting you.

MRS. CHESTER (*concerned*): Me?—but my husband always comes. He's not worse?

ASHENDEN: No, no. He's all right. But he's a bit tired and he's waiting on the seat at the bottom of the path. Let me take your bag.

MRS. CHESTER: Thank you. You gave me quite a turn. He really *is* all right?

ASHENDEN: Quite. It's just this last bit that tries him. Shall I take your basket?

He takes the bag.

MRS. CHESTER: No. I'll carry that.

ASHENDEN: What have you got there?

MRS. CHESTER: Something he'll like.

She proudly lifts the lid. He helps her into carriage.

MRS. CHESTER: Bottled black currants—from the bushes he planted himself.

ASHENDEN: Sounds delicious.

MRS. CHESTER: Yes—you must sample some. I was very worried when I did them. I tried out a different kind of jar with a new cap, but it was the most successful bottling I've ever had. Henry'll be so pleased.

ASHENDEN: I'm sure he will. All right, coachman.
Carriage moves off.

DISSOLVE

41. *Exterior. Day.*

Mr. Chester is sitting on a seat at the bottom of the path. He looks ill and unhappy, but on hearing Ashenden call, he stands up and waves, with a rather pathetic attempt to smile. Ashenden and Mrs. Chester are seen in long shot and come walking up to where Chester is sitting.

CHESTER: Hello, my dear.

MRS. CHESTER: Hello, Henry dear.

He kisses her in a stiff, reserved way.

CHESTER: Was it a nice journey?

MRS. CHESTER: Lovely. Quite the best I've had. I got a corner seat all the way. How are you, dear?

You look much better, doesn't he, Mr. Ashenden?

ASHENDEN: He's all right.

CHESTER (*indicating the basket*): I'll take that.

MRS. CHESTER (*a little undecided; then holding it out*): Yes—you might as well have it now, as later. (*As he takes it.*) With my best wishes, Henry, for a very Happy Christmas.

CHESTER: What is it?

MRS. CHESTER: The black currants from the garden, of course. Don't you remember, I promised to bottle some?

Her words trail off in dismay as she watches his face. He stares into the basket, then turns his head away as the sight of the fruit brings to him a deadly pang of homesickness. There is anguish on his face, then he suddenly thrusts the basket into her hands, shouting with fury.

CHESTER: Are you mad, bringing those up here? Haven't I enough to bear without your doing this to me?

MRS. CHESTER (*in horror*): I'm sorry, Henry.

CHESTER: What have I ever done to you to make you come torturing and tormenting me?

MRS. CHESTER: I'm sorry, dear. I—I didn't think.

CHESTER: You didn't *think*—then it's time you *did* think.

He strides on angrily ahead of her, as though wishing she were out of his sight. Mrs. Chester looks up pathetically at Ashenden and together they continue on their way in silence.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

42. *Exterior McLeod's Room. Day. McLeod's Double-Clad Windows.*

We are shooting from outside the house and we can see McLeod's window and the one below (Campbell's). McLeod is sitting in his arm-chair by the open window, reading. Outside, the snow has gone and there is the first hint of spring in the air. Suddenly the silence is broken by Campbell's violin, which rouses McLeod to fury. He bangs on the floor with his stick, then leans out of the window and shouts down to Campbell.

MCLEOD: Stop that caterwauling, will you? I can't hear myself think! (*The music continues.*) Campbell! Stop that filthy row!

For answer, Campbell opens wider his window, and then continues with his piece. McLeod gets up and stumps out of the room, banging the door.

43. *Interior Veranda. Day.*

Ashenden is playing chess with Evie Bishop, who is well wrapped up as usual. McLeod comes out into the veranda and joins them.

MCLEOD: That fiend Campbell is enough to drive a body mad.

ASHENDEN: What's he done now?

MCLEOD: Mrs. Chester said she liked that tune of his at Christmas, so he's played it every blessed day for the last six weeks. I shan't pass out with T.B.—I shall go off my rocker and it'll be his fault!

Miss Bishop laughs and then stops as she sees Templeton approaching from the lounge. She smiles tenderly.

ASHENDEN (*to Templeton*): Hello—glad to see you down again.

TEMPLETON: It was only a bit of a cold. I'm all right now.

EVIE: How about that walk?

TEMPLETON: Only as far as the wood, I'm afraid.
Doctor's orders.

EVIE: Never mind! It's better than nothing. (*Turning to McLeod.*) Would you mind finishing the game for me, Mr. McLeod? I've nearly beaten him. *She picks up her gloves and goes off with Templeton. McLeod takes her place next to Ashenden.*

MCLEOD: I wonder if there's anything between those two? They do say he was a devil with the girls before he got ill.

ASHENDEN: Oh, I think that little girl can take care of herself.

MCLEOD: You never can tell. I've seen some rum things in my day. (*Pause.*) She'll be an awful fool if she gets stuck on him. She's got a chance of getting well.

ASHENDEN: Hasn't he?

MCLEOD (*shaking his head*): No. . . . When I look at a fellow I make up my mind at once whether he'll get well or whether he won't. If he won't, I can make a pretty shrewd guess how long he'll last. I give Templeton about two years.

McLeod has been looking at Ashenden during this speech and now, as Ashenden looks a trifle concerned, McLeod laughs and adds—

MCLEOD: You needn't worry! You're all right. I wouldn't have mentioned it, if I hadn't been pretty sure of that. I don't want Lennox to hoof me out for scaring his patients!

He laughs again and Ashenden joins in, rather half-heartedly.

44. *Exterior Wood. Day.*

Templeton and Evie walking in the wood.

EVIE: You're not tired, are you?

TEMPLETON: I'm never tired when I'm with you,

EVIE. You know when they told me I'd got to come up here I never thought I'd be able to stick it. I expected to be bored stiff. You've made it for me, Evie. I think I've been happier here than I've ever been before. As long as you're here I'm prepared to stay for ever.

EVIE: Oh, don't talk such rubbish. It's only because you're feeling so much better.

TEMPLETON: I suppose it hasn't escaped your notice that I've fallen in love with you?

EVIE: Will you take my advice?

TEMPLETON: Always.

EVIE: Then fall out of it.

TEMPLETON: Ask me to give you a pearl necklace or a mink coat and I will. Ask me to jump over the moon, and by George I'll do it. But don't ask me to fall out of love with you. In the first place, I can't, and in the second place I don't want to.

EVIE: Bad business, isn't it?

TEMPLETON: I suppose you're not in the least in love with me?

EVIE: What a fool I should be if I were.

TEMPLETON: You once told me you had a technique for dealing with predatory males.

EVIE: Yes.

TEMPLETON: How many have tried to make love to you?

EVIE: Dozens.

TEMPLETON: I'd like to wring the neck of every one of them.

EVIE (*laughing*): I very nearly called you darling then.

TEMPLETON: Why the deuce didn't you?

EVIE: It wouldn't have meant anything.

TEMPLETON: Hard as nails, that's what you are.

EVIE: Yes. I've got a beastly character.

TEMPLETON: That's a lie. You're the sweetest and the kindest and prettiest girl in the world. *The twelve o'clock bell rings from the sanatorium for the patients to take their hour's rest before lunch.*

EVIE: That's the afternoon rest bell.

TEMPLETON: Curse the afternoon rest bell.

EVIE: We shall get into trouble from Dr. Lennox.

TEMPLETON: Don't you think the time has arrived when you might let me kiss you?

EVIE: Well, I haven't given the matter much thought, but if you think it'll give you any pleasure—(*pointing to her cheek with her forefinger*)—just once, and just there.

TEMPLETON: Just once and just there.

He tries to take her in his arms, but she pushes him away and turns her face so that he can just kiss her cheek.

DISSOLVE

45. *Interior Veranda. Day.*

Mrs. Whitbread and Miss Atkin—in their usual place of vantage—are leaning tensely forward, looking out of the windows at Evie Bishop and Templeton returning across the lawn. They are lightly holding hands—swinging their arms—talking and laughing happily together until they are half-way to the house. Then—conscious no doubt of eyes upon them—they leave go of each other's hands and walk sedately.

EVIE: Hello, there.

TEMPLETON: How do you do?

MISS ATKIN: Good afternoon. (*To Mrs. Whitbread.*)

You see the guilty way they let go of one another's hands? And look at her hair—all ruffled up.

MRS. WHITBREAD: It might have been the wind.

MISS ATKIN: There isn't any wind.

45a. *McLeod walks into the scene. He looks very serious and dignified.*

MCLEOD: Good afternoon, ladies.

LADIES: Good afternoon, Mr. McLeod.

MCLEOD: May I sit down?

MISS ATKIN: Do, please.

McLeod draws up a chair, sits down and glances around as if intent upon a confidential talk.

MCLEOD: Am I right in supposing that both you ladies have the good name of this sanatorium at heart?

MISS ATKIN: We certainly have.

MCLEOD: Then you agree with me that the time has come for the senior residents to take a strong stand?—to decide once and for all whether this is to be a high-class sanatorium or a monkey house?

MRS. WHITBREAD: We certainly do—and I'm very glad you're taking the lead, Mr. McLeod.

MCLEOD: I dislike intensely the necessity of interfering with other peoples' pleasure. . . .

MISS ATKIN: *Pleasure* you call it!

MRS. WHITBREAD: I could think of a very different name.

MCLEOD: So could I. But let us be generous and call it pleasure. (*Pause.*) We must force Dr. Lennox to take drastic measures.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Shall we get up a deputation?

MCLEOD: I have a better idea—a petition signed by all the senior residents.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Won't it be a little difficult to—er—put a complaint like this into words?

MCLEOD: Why? It's perfectly simple and straightforward. I've got it here—all ready. (*He pulls a sheet of paper out of his pocket.*) I've gone straight to the point without mincing matters. (*He reads:*

"We, the undersigned, being resident patients, of long standing in your Sanatorium, hereby demand

that you shall forthwith restrain Gordon Percival Campbell from slowly driving us mad by the incessant playing of his violin. We further demand that if he is caught playing within a radius of one mile of this Sanatorium, he shall be requested to leave immediately."

He holds out the paper with a smile of triumph.

MCLEOD: There! Now if you two ladies will sign it. . . .

The old ladies stare at him in astonishment.

MISS ATKIN: But . . . but what has Mr. Campbell's violin got to do with it?

MCLEOD (*surprised*): Do with it—that *is* it.

MRS. WHITBREAD: But we thought you were talking about Miss Bishop and Major Templeton.

MCLEOD: Why should I? *They* don't play violins.

MISS ATKIN: But you must have noticed the disgraceful way they're carrying on?

MCLEOD: What does *that* matter?—it doesn't keep you awake. I wouldn't dream of interfering as long as they do it in silence.

MISS ATKIN (*with spirit*): And I wouldn't dream of stopping poor Mr. Campbell from playing his violin. I like it. But those other two—d'you realise they spent the whole afternoon in the woods together?

MCLEOD (*angrily*): If you and Campbell spent a few afternoons in the woods you'd *both* be better occupied.

He stalks off. The gong goes for dinner.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Let me give you a cup of tea, dear.

DISSOLVE

46. *Interior Dining-Room. Day.*

Ashenden is just finishing his lunch, together with Chester, Miss Bishop and Major Templeton who for some time now has made up the four at their table. They have all reached the coffee stage. Evie is looking at her small diary.

EVIE: The thirty-first to-morrow. I *must* remember to write to Mother.

TEMPLETON: Why?

EVIE: Her birthday. Mr. Chester, your wife will be coming to-morrow. That's something to look forward to.

CHESTER: She's not coming this month.

EVIE: Oh, I'm sorry. Why not?

CHESTER: Dr. Lennox thinks it's better for me that she shouldn't.

TEMPLETON: I say, that's a bit tough. Why don't you tell old Lennox to go jump in the lake?

CHESTER: He must know best.

Evie gives Templeton a look and they both rise.

EVIE: Never mind, next month, perhaps.

They leave the table and Ashenden is alone with Chester.

ASHENDEN: I'm awfully sorry. You'll miss her visit dreadfully.

CHESTER: I asked Lennox to write and tell her not to.

ASHENDEN: But why?

CHESTER: I couldn't stick it any longer. I spend the whole month looking forward to her coming and then when she's here I hate her.

ASHENDEN: Oh, come now.

CHESTER: I do resent so awfully having this beastly disease, while she's strong and well. It maddens me to see the pain in her eyes. What does it matter to her really?

ASHENDEN: I'm sure it matters a great deal.

CHESTER: Oh, they pretend to care, but they are jolly glad it's you and not them.

ASHENDEN: Aren't you afraid you'll make her unhappy by not letting her come?

CHESTER: She'll have to put up with that. I've got enough with my own unhappiness, without bothering with hers.

ASHENDEN: That's a bit hard on her, surely?

CHESTER: It's all very well for you to be so unselfish. You're going to live. I'm going to die and I don't want to die! Why should I? It's not fair!

He jumps up and leaves the table.

DISSOLVE

47. *Exterior River. Day.*

Dr. Lennox and Ashenden are sitting on the river bank, enjoying a quiet day's fishing. The sun is shining and there is an air of peace prevailing over the hills beyond them.

ASHENDEN: I'm sorry for Chester. He doesn't seem to be able to stand up to things like the others.

LENNOX: That's because he's sorry for himself. You know, they say suffering ennobles, but it's not true. As a general rule it makes men petty, querulous and selfish.

ASHENDEN: I haven't noticed that much here.

LENNOX: Oh here! There's not much suffering at the sanatorium . . . the slight fever which goes with T.B. excites rather than depresses, you know.

ASHENDEN: By the way, when am I due for another check-up?

LENNOX: Come in to-morrow. Better make it the afternoon. Don't worry, you're all right, but I'm hanged if I am!

ASHENDEN: Why what's the matter?

LENNOX: I haven't had a bite for two hours!

He flicks his line irritably and gazes out fretfully over the water.

DISSOLVE

48. *Interior Lennox's Surgery. Day.*

Dr. Lennox is at his desk comparing X-ray photographs in an illuminated frame. Ashenden is looking over his shoulder.

LENNOX: Now—this is the one taken the day you came. You see, the bad patch—there. (*Ashenden peers closely.*) Here's last week's. It's healed up completely.

ASHENDEN: Good. When are you going to throw me out?

LENNOX: Give it another month and then go home—unless you're thinking of settling down here for seventeen years like our old friends Campbell and McLeod!

ASHENDEN: You know, I owe a lot to those two fellows. They've done more to cure me than your treatment.

LENNOX: They're the best comic turn we've had here for years.

They laugh and go out.

49. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

As Lennox and Ashenden come along the landing and down the stairs, high words are heard from a corner of the lounge. They exchange a smile and saunter over towards the table, where McLeod and Campbell are playing with two other men. Their angry voices float across to Lennox and Ashenden as they approach.

MCLEOD'S VOICE: Leave it on the table! You've played it!

CAMPBELL'S VOICE: I haven't played it till it's covered.

MCLEOD'S VOICE: You picked it up when you saw my king! It's my trick.

Lennox and Ashenden reach the card table. The atmosphere is tense. Several people are standing round watching—Templeton among them.

TEMPLETON (to Ashenden): It's game all and McLeod's called a grand slam—doubled.

MCLEOD (looking up, frowning): Redoubled! I redoubled him!

McLeod's face is white with excitement. There are beads of sweat on his forehead. His hands are trembling. Dr. Lennox looks worried.

LENNOX (quietly): Don't get excited. Take it easy, MCLEOD.

MCLEOD (fiercely): Take it easy, you say! Take it easy—I've wanted to get a grand slam all my life, and . . . and now I've got it!

Triumphantly he dashes his last trump on the table and rakes in the cards. He springs up, arrogant with victory, and shakes his clenched fist in Campbell's face.

MCLEOD: There! Grand slam—doubled and redoubled! Play that off on your blasted fiddle. All my life I've wanted that—and God be thanked it's you I've done it on!

CAMPBELL: You're a bad loser and a worse winner, but then of course you're a McLeod.

McLeod turns in triumph—gasps—clutches at his chest and crashes to the floor. Lennox kneels down beside the stricken man. The other guests draw back horrified. The six o'clock gong is sounded by the maid. It rings through the silent lounge like a death knell.

LENNOX: Give me a hand Ashenden, will you?
Oh Nurse, fetch Matron for me quickly.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

50. *Interior Lennox's Surgery. Day.*

Lennox is at work. There is a knock and after a "come in" from the doctor, Campbell enters. He looks intensely miserable.

LENNOX: Hello, Campbell. You don't look very happy.

CAMPBELL: I'm not.

LENNOX: What's the trouble? I thought all your worries were over. You've got McLeod's room now.

CAMPBELL (*unhappily*): Aye. It was about that I came to see you. I've been up there all the morning, but I'd rather go back to my old room if you don't mind.

LENNOX (*losing his temper*): Good heavens man! You pestered me for years to let you have McLeod's room. You pestered me to get him out of it so that you could have it, and now it's yours, you come here saying you don't want it.

CAMPBELL (*in abject misery*): I know—I know.

LENNOX: Oh dear, oh dear. Look, Campbell. You are a funny chap. (*Softening.*) Why don't you go and play your violin? I haven't heard you play since McLeod died.

CAMPBELL: It's no fun any more. I used to get a kick out of playing because it made the poor chap wild. But now nobody cares whether I play or not. I'll never play again.

LENNOX: Nonsense. You used to say you couldn't live if you didn't play.

CAMPBELL (*sadly*): Aye.

He goes out dejectedly.

51. *Exterior River. Day.*

Evie and Templeton are strolling along by the river bank. They come to rest by some rocks jutting out into the water. Templeton is attacked by a fit of coughing.

52. *Exterior River Bank. Day.*

Evie is sitting with a book. She raises her eyes and they light up as she sees Templeton approach. He has a box of flowers in his hand.

TEMPLETON: I've brought you a few flowers.

EVIE (*taking them*): That's sweet of you. But how on earth did you get them up here?

TEMPLETON: I phoned to my florist's in London and told them to send a man up with them.

EVIE: How very wrong and extravagant of you. They do smell sweet.

He looks at her for a moment thoughtfully.

TEMPLETON: Would it surprise you if I asked you to marry me?

EVIE: No, I've been expecting you to do that for the last three months.

TEMPLETON: You might have told me. I wouldn't have waited so long. Will you?

EVIE: Of course not. The idea's perfectly ridiculous.

TEMPLETON: Why?

EVIE: Well, we're both patients in a sanatorium. We've come here to get well, not to get married.

TEMPLETON: Does that mean you think I'm too great a crock?

EVIE: Of course not.

TEMPLETON: I'm very much in love with you. I fell in love with you from the first day I ever saw you. D'you remember how beastly you were to me that day? That clinched it.

EVIE: Why have you never married before?

TEMPLETON: That's an easy one. Because till I met you I'd never met anyone I wanted to marry.

EVIE: It's absurd. It would be perfect madness for a pair of crocks like us to get married.

TEMPLETON (*smiling*): But?

EVIE: I wonder if by any chance I'm in love with you?

TEMPLETON: It would be nice for me if you were.

EVIE: You see, I don't know what it feels like being in love. Is it like being a bit tight?

TEMPLETON: Much nicer.

EVIE: I wouldn't know. I never have been tight. But if it's being all of a dither when a particular person comes into the room, then I suppose I am in love with you.

TEMPLETON: Oh, my sweet. My sweet.

He takes her in his arms.

EVIE: I've been so lonely all these years.

TEMPLETON: Me too. And like a fool I didn't know it.

He kisses her tenderly on the lips.

DISSOLVE

53. *Interior Veranda. Day.*

Ashenden, returning from a walk, comes briskly across the grounds and up the terrace steps. Templeton, muffled in his greatcoat, is sitting there alone.

TEMPLETON: What a day.

ASHENDEN: Grand, isn't it?

TEMPLETON: Spring's here at last.

ASHENDEN: Yes. There are snowdrops out there in the woods.

TEMPLETON: You're off, I hear?

ASHENDEN: In a couple of weeks.

TRIO

TEMPLETON: I'm off, too. Quite soon.

ASHENDEN (*startled*): Oh? Splendid.

TEMPLETON (*laughing*): Surprised?

ASHENDEN (*pretending*): No. Why should I be?

TEMPLETON: You will be when I tell you why . . .

I've asked Evie Bishop to marry me.

ASHENDEN: What did she say?

TEMPLETON: She said it was the most ridiculous thing she'd ever heard in her life and I was crazy to think of such a thing.

ASHENDEN: You must admit she was right.

TEMPLETON: Quite. But she's going to marry me just the same. (*He laughs.*) You're looking at me like those two old ladies!

ASHENDEN: Has Lennox passed you as fit?

TEMPLETON: I don't need a doctor to tell me I'm fit. I never felt better in my life. Fresh air, and the quiet life, and Evie. What more could a man want to put him on his feet again?

ASHENDEN: Are you really in love with her?

TEMPLETON (*nodding*): Rum thing at my time of life, falling in love with a decent girl. Last thing I'd ever have expected of myself. I've always thought girls, decent girls, I mean, shocking bores. But she isn't.

ASHENDEN: No. She's charming.

TEMPLETON: Pretty, too. And clever as paint. But that isn't what bowled me over. Do you know what it is? Ridiculous when you come to think of it—an old rip like me. Virtue. Last thing I've ever wanted in a woman, but there it is, no getting away from it. She's good—and it makes me feel like a worm. (*He glances at Ashenden.*) Surprises you, I suppose?

ASHENDEN: Not at all. You're not the first rake

who's fallen to innocence. It's just the sentimentality of middle age!

TEMPLETON: Dirty dog!

ASHENDEN: What does Lennox say about it?

TEMPLETON: I don't know yet. Evie thought it was a good plan to have a check-up, and I did the same.

DISSOLVE

14. *Interior Lounge. Day.*

Mrs. Whitbread, Miss Atkin and several others are sitting round having tea. In a far corner Templeton and Evie are seen.

MRS. WHITBREAD: When are they seeing the doctor?

ASHENDEN: Four o'clock I think they said.

MRS. WHITBREAD (*glancing across the room*): It's the most scandalous thing I've ever heard of.

MISS ATKIN: It's worse than scandalous. It's criminal. Somebody ought to write to their relations about it and get it stopped.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Dr. Lennox will stop it. You see. *In their corner, Evie and Templeton are talking of normal everyday things to keep from one another their anxiety at the coming interview.*

TEMPLETON: Not nervous, are you?

EVIE: Not a bit.

TEMPLETON: Liar.

EVIE: Well, I'm no more nervous than you are!

TEMPLETON: I've got good reason to be. It means all the world to me.

EVIE: Don't say things like that. You'll make me cry.

TEMPLETON: Hang it all, I can't help it if I'm so much in love with you, I can't see straight.

EVIE: Will you kiss me?

TEMPLETON: Now keep a stiff upper lip, old girl. *(They have reached Lennox's door.)*

EVIE: Kiss me. (*They kiss and Templeton knocks on the door.*)

55. *Interior Lennox's Surgery. Day.*

LENNOX: Come in.

They enter. He is telephoning.

(*Into receiver.*) Yes, yes, when—yes. I can do that. Yes I'd love to come. (*To patients.*) Come along in. Sit down. I shan't be a minute. (*Telephoning.*) It's awfully good of you to ask me. Oh, yes, I can easily get away for a couple of days. My assistant's first rate. I'm looking forward to it. Good-bye! (*He turns to Evie and Templeton.*) Chap I know has just asked me to fish for a couple of days. Got the best salmon in Scotland. Well, I've got the whole story here.

He begins sorting over papers and X-ray photos.

LENNOX: Reports on the tests—X-rays and everything. Would you care for me to go over them in detail?

TEMPLETON: There's no need for that. You understand them better than we do. All we want to know is whether we can get married.

LENNOX (*hesitating*): I think it would be very unwise.

TEMPLETON: How unwise?

There is a short silence.

LENNOX: I'll tell you the facts. Then you must decide for yourselves.

Templeton gives Evie a little smile and takes her hand.

LENNOX: I don't think Miss Bishop will ever be strong enough to lead a normal life—but if she goes on as she has been doing for the past eight years——

EVIE: In a sanatorium?

LENNOX: Yes. There's no reason why she shouldn't

live comfortably—if not to a ripe old age, at least as long as any sensible person wants to live. The disease is quiescent. If you marry—if you attempt to lead an ordinary life—then the infection may well light up again. What the results of that might be, no one can foretell.

TEMPLETON: What about me?

LENNOX (*hesitantly*): Your case is different. I wouldn't be as brutal as this if I could have avoided it, Templeton. But since you've asked me, I've got to tell you. If you marry, you'll be dead in six months.

TEMPLETON: And if I don't?

Lennox pauses.

TEMPLETON: Don't worry. You can tell me the truth.

LENNOX: Two years. Three, perhaps.

TEMPLETON (*rising*): Thanks. That's all we wanted to know.

He turns to Evie. There are tears in her eyes. He takes her hand and they go away.

DISSOLVE

Interior Lounge. Day.

The two old ladies, with other patients, are sitting round the fire. All their thoughts and talk is about Evie and Templeton.

MISS ATKIN: It's as I said. Dr. Lennox has stopped it. If he hadn't they'd have come down and told us long ago.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Poor things . . . I wonder where they are?

Chester walks into the circle.

CHESTER: They're in the little library upstairs. I went in for a book. They were alone. Of course, I came right out and left them.

MRS. WHITBREAD: Was she crying?

CHESTER: No, she was smiling.

MISS ATKIN: Ssh! Here they are!

All eyes turn towards the stairs. Templeton and Evie Bishop are coming down. They are smiling happily. They walk triumphantly across the lounge to the group round the fire.

ASHENDEN: What's the matter with you? You look as pleased as punch.

TEMPLETON: Oh, nothing very much. We're just going to be married.

MISS ATKIN: You're not?

TEMPLETON: But we are.

There is a surprised silence—then everybody begins to congratulate them. Ashenden comes from across the room and shakes Templeton's hand.

ASHENDEN: When is it to be?

TEMPLETON: As soon as we get the licence. . . .

EVIE (*to Miss Atkin*): We want to be married here.

MISS ATKIN (*sniffing*): In the village church?

EVIE: Yes. I'm afraid my family would disapprove—so we're not going to tell them till it's over. I shall ask Dr. Lennox to give me away.

She sees Mr. Chester and goes over to him.

EVIE: Mr. Chester, I should so much like your wife to come to the wedding. D'you think she would?

CHESTER (*hesitating*): Well—I——

EVIE: Do please ask her.

CHESTER (*shakily*): It's kind of you to want her. I'll . . . I'll write to-day.

EVIE: Thank you.

Templeton has taken Ashenden's arm. They are walking away from the others to an alcove by the window.

DISSOLVE

57. *Exterior Church. Day.*

The service is over. The guests are grouped outside. They shower the bride and bridegroom with confetti as they come out and cross the little churchyard to a waiting car that has a pile of luggage strapped to it. Templeton and Evie enter the car. There are shouts of "Good Luck!" and the last farewells. Campbell ties an old shoe to the back of the car. Evie laughs happily and waves back to the guests as the car moves off along the valley. Then the guests, in twos and threes, start back on their return to the sanatorium. As they walk away by themselves, Mr. Chester shyly slips his hand through his wife's arm.

CHESTER: I've been unkind to you, my dear. I want you to forgive me.

MRS. CHESTER: I know you didn't mean it.

CHESTER: But I did. I *wanted* you to suffer because I was suffering. But not any more.

MRS. CHESTER: You don't have to say all that, dear.

CHESTER: But I must say it. I want you to live and be happy. I won't resent anything any more . . . because I love you.

MRS. CHESTER: Oh, Henry.

58. *Interior Car. Day.*

Evie and Templeton in the car on the way to their honeymoon. He takes her hand and squeezes it. She smiles at him. Perhaps they kiss, as we—

FADE OUT

THE END